THE CHILDREN'S MUNCHAUSEN

RETOLD BY JOHN MARTIN

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THE CHILDREN'S MUNCHAUSEN

I FAIRLY LIFTED THE VESSEL SEVERAL YARDS OUT OF WATER

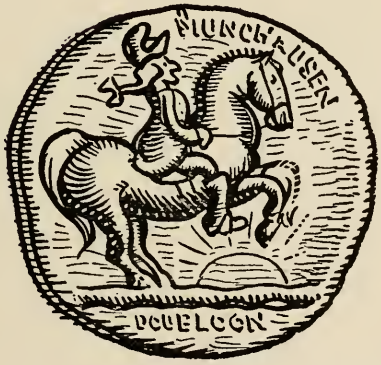
(*page* 121)

THE CHILDREN'S MUNCHAUSEN

RETOLD BY JOHN MARTIN

ILLUSTRATED BY

GORDON ROSS



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FOREWORD

To my Young Readers

When I was younger I seldom read "Forewords" or even "Afterwords" to the books I hoped to enjoy, or, having read, had enjoyed. My habit was to think that authors deprived me of pages that might have been much more interestingly used. In fact, I considered prefatory pages and introductions a waste of paper and thieves of my valuable time. Perhaps you feel as I once did about prosy prefaces and serious forewords. If so, I fully understand and sympathize, but as I write these lines I cannot help having the hope that some of you will read them. If you do I am sure you will put something away into your memory store that will give you what I lost as a boy, a more complete and more worth while knowledge of this book and others that you may read. Yes, "the preface habit" is a good one and does more for us than we realize; besides, it is a rather pleasant way to take a peep into the real inside of the Author's head and heart.

I believe a short story of the book, *Munchausen*, its author, and those who contributed to the *Baron's Adventures*, will interest you; besides, I have a feeling of responsibility in the matter, thinking it only right that you should be admitted into a mystery that has always surrounded the stories gathered for you in this book.

For many years there was much uncertainty as to the au-

thorship of *The Travels of Baron Munchausen*, and as to its object there were many differences of opinion. It is not for me to awaken discussion long forgotten; therefore all I shall do is give you those opinions that are most reliable and from sources that are within my own reach.

In 1851 a London literary sheet called *Notes and Queries* said, "*The Travels of Baron Munchausen* was written to ridicule Mr. James Bruce, an Abyssinian explorer and traveler whose adventures at that time were thought to be fictitious." It is doubtful, however, if this reason for *Munchausen* is true, for in my own library I have a two-volume edition of *Munchausen* published by Kearsley in 1792–93, the first volume of which contains engravings marked as follows, "Published as the Act directs for G. Kearsley at No. 46, in Fleet Street, London, 1786." This date was four years before *Mr. Bruce's Travels* appeared. I am telling you this not as something of great importance to the why and wherefore of *Munchausen*, but rather as an interesting bit of knowledge you may use when you come to read the original editions of the book.

As to the authorship of the work there is now no doubt, for it is known that at least Chapters II, III, IV, V, and VI were written by Rudolf Erich Raspe,[1] and, as my old edition of 1792–93 says in the Editor's preface, "the rest are the production of another pen, written in the Baron's manner."

From this you will see that Raspe was the original fabri-

[1] In this edition of the Baron's adventures the original chapters by Raspe are represented by Chapters II, III, IV, V, and XIX.

cator, who, with five chapters, inspired another and probably many others to build up two volumes of lies that have come to be considered the last word in fibbing, and *classics* of monstrous imagination. In the book I give you, the five famous chapters stand just as they appeared in the early editions save for such editing as seemed wise for me to make. It will be interesting for you to compare these chapters with those "written by another in the Baron's manner."

There have been many editions of *Munchausen*, and those in the German have all sorts of added adventures, but those I have included in this book of yours are made entirely from the only authentic source, the early English editions.

The Author, Rudolf Erich Raspe, was born in Hanover in 1737. He became a brilliant scholar and student of natural history and a great judge of antique jewelry. As the years passed, he grew to be a greater scamp than scholar, and his fondness for old jewelry led him to steal a collection from his employer; hence, in 1775 we see him a fugitive from justice, working his talents in England. In that country he lived by his brains, of which he had a plenty, and by his wits, which got him into frequent trouble. After years of honest writing and questionable uses of his wit, we find that he "salted," or scattered, valuable minerals on the estate of Sir John Sinclair. This kind and ever hopeful old baronet was successfully tolled along for a good but dangerous living for some time. The day came, however, when Raspe was caught in his "salting," but he was a bird that feared his own salt, and away he flew to Ireland,

where he died at Muckross in 1794. I should like to moralize a little right here with you upon the subject of ill-used talents and the evil thereof, but as you will do all that is necessary yourselves, why should I philosophize?

During his life Raspe was never known to be the originator of *Munchausen.* Until 1824 one August Bürger, a German and translator only of Raspe's tales, allowed it to be understood that he was the author, but in due time it fell to Bürger's lot to die, and his biographer let the cat out of the bag, much to the annoyance of friends who thought it best to leave well enough alone. I have no doubt that you will sometime have it said to you that *Munchausen* first appeared in German, but do not let that bother you; just say, "How about that edition of 1792–93 published in London by G. Kearsley?"

As to my part in making this book for you, I claim nothing save a very sincere desire to arrange a book that you will love and value and, above all, one that is *right* for you to use until you are old enough to read and understand the quaint old editions. (I wish you might then use one of mine, as I have many.)

I have left for you all the Baron's exact words and manners with the connection of the tales, only cutting out vulgarities common to a time when a spade was a spade too often to make proper reading. Cruelties I have omitted, for these are unnecessary to the interest of the stories. When long political discussions and the Baron's tiresome boasts arose, I ruthlessly reduced their length, for they add no color or punch to *ad-*

venture. The second volume of my old edition I have written down to a few chapters, for I cannot understand it, to say nothing of getting enjoyment out of it.

In this book I have tried to give you a *Munchausen* that preserves the style and spirit of the original writing so that one day you will read the older renderings easily and familiarly and with real enjoyment and knowledge.

Finally, I sincerely hope that I have given you a book that will add to your joy and inspire you to a love of those classic tales that round out your literary taste and judgment.

Always your sincere friend,

JOHN MARTIN

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CHAPTER I

The Baron compliments his young Readers — He begins an account of his travels — An astonishing storm and its strange effect — He arrives at Ceylon; battles with, and conquers, two extraordinary opponents — Returns to Holland and is honorably rewarded

THE TRAVELS
OF
BARON MUNCHAUSEN

CHAPTER I

I AM sure the young Readers for whom I am especially writing my many and varied adventures will look upon these opening words with favor and belief when I say that I was of very tender years when one of my most remarkable experiences came to me. Being certain of your attention and sympathy, no matter how unjustly I may be slandered by those of mature years, I shall proceed with my true and remarkable narrative.

Some years before my beard foreshadowed coming manhood, — in fact, when I was neither man nor boy, but rather a little of both, — I had a strong desire to see the world. In this very natural and even commendable ambition I was discouraged by my parents. A cousin of my mother's, however, took a liking to me, and, after re-

marking that I was a fine and eager youth, was inclined to gratify my not unworthy desire for adventure. My cousin's eloquence had more effect than mine, and my father agreed to my sailing with him on a voyage to the Island of Ceylon where my great-uncle had resided as governor for many years. I was indeed pleased to be so flattered by my respected parent, who proved thereby his respect for my desires and ambitions.

We sailed from Amsterdam with all fitting sanction and approval from the States of Holland. The only thing worth telling you which happened on our voyage was the wonderful effect of a storm we encountered. When lying at anchor near an island where we had taken in wood and water, the gale struck us. Such was its terrific force that it tore up by the roots great numbers of trees of enormous bulk and height. Some of these trees weighed many tons, yet they were carried by the wind so amazingly high that they appeared like the feathers of small birds floating in the air. These trees were hurled at least five miles from the earth. However, as soon as the storm subsided, they all fell straight down into the places from which they had been torn, and took root immediately.

One only, and that the largest tree, fell elsewhere. It

happened, when blown into the air, to have a man and his wife (a very honest old couple) upon its branches. This couple had been gathering cucumbers which grew in great abundance thereon. In this part of the globe, that useful vegetable grows upon trees. The imposing weight of this worthy couple overbalanced the tree as it descended, and brought it down in a horizontal position. With great force it fell upon the chief man of the island and killed him on the spot. This person had quitted his house in the storm, having an idea that another place might be a safer retreat. As he hastened through his own vegetable garden, this fortunate accident happened.

The word *fortunate* requires some explanation here, for I would not give my young readers an impression of indifference to the calamities of others. It must be said that this chief was a man of very avaricious and oppressive disposition, and, though he had no family to make miserable, the natives were half starved by his unjust and infamous impositions. He was commonly known to exact rentals far beyond the means of his tenants, and then what remained of their scanty savings was paid out for bread of poor quality, sold by him at a tenfold profit. Great stores of goods taken from the wretched natives were spoiling in his warehouses while

his plundered victims were pining in poverty. Though the destruction of this tyrant was *accidental*, such accidents may be justly called fortunate. At least, the accident was so considered by the natives of the island, who immediately chose the cucumber-gatherers for their governors, as a mark of gratitude for thus ridding them of their late tyrant by means so *accidental*.

After we had repaired the damage caused by the storm, and taken respectful leave of the new governor and his lady, we sailed with a fair wind for the object of our voyage. In about six weeks we arrived at Ceylon, where we were received with great marks of friendship and true politeness.

Though of no great importance compared with other of my experiences, the following singular adventure may prove interesting to young people of lively wits and active imagination.

After we had resided at Ceylon about a fortnight, I accompanied a brother of the governor upon a shooting party. He was a strong, athletic man, and, being used to that climate, he bore the violent heat of the sun much better than I. In our excursion he had made considerable progress through the thick wood when I was only at the entrance.

Near the banks of a large body of water which held my attention, I thought I heard a rustling noise behind me. On facing about I was almost turned to stone at the sight of a lion, which was evidently approaching with the selfish intention of satisfying his appetite upon my poor carcass, and that without asking my consent. What was to be done in this horrible dilemma? I had not even a moment for thinking the matter over. My gun was only loaded with swan-shot, and I had no heavier lead about me. However, though I could have no idea of killing such an animal with this poor ammunition, yet I had some hopes of frightening him by the report. I therefore let fly without waiting till he was within reach. The report did but enrage the beast, for he now quickened his pace and came at me full speed. I tried to escape, but this only added to my distress, for the moment I turned about I found a large crocodile with open jaws ready to receive me. On the right hand was the body of water before mentioned, and on my left a deep precipice, at the bottom of which venomous creatures gathered in great numbers. In short, I gave myself up for lost, for the lion was now upon his hind legs in the act of seizing me. I stumbled and fell to the ground with fear, and the ravenous creature sprang over me.

There I lay in a situation which no language can describe, expecting each terrific moment to feel his teeth or claws in some part of my person. After waiting in this prostrate situation for what seemed a very long time, I heard a loud but strange noise, different from any sound that had ever attacked my ears; nor is this at all to be wondered at, when I tell you whence it proceeded. Venturing to raise my head, I looked about, and to my great joy I perceived the lion, in his eagerness to dine upon me, had sprung over my prostrate carcass, clean into the crocodile's jaws, which, as I have told you, were wide open! The head of the lion stuck in the throat of the crocodile, and each was now struggling to be rid of the other! I fortunately remembered my *couteau de chasse* (hunting-knife) which was at my side; with this I cut off the lion's head at one blow! This was no mean feat, I assure you. Then, with the butt of my fowling-piece, I assisted the lion's head farther into the throat of the crocodile. As the creature could neither swallow nor cough up this morsel, he instantly died of suffocation.

When I had thus gained this complete victory over my two powerful adversaries, my companion arrived in search of me. After mutual congratulations, we mea-

THE HEAD OF THE LION STUCK IN THE THROAT OF THE CROCODILE

sured the crocodile, which was just forty feet in length. As soon as I had told this strange and hazardous adventure to the governor, he sent a wagon and servants who brought home the two carcasses. The lion's skin was properly preserved with its hair on, after which it was made into tobacco pouches and presented by me, upon my return to Holland, to the Burgomasters. In return for my generous gifts, I was requested to accept a thousand ducats.

The skin of the crocodile was stuffed in the usual manner and makes a capital article in the public museum at Amsterdam, where the exhibitor relates the whole story to each visitor, with such additions as he thinks proper. Some of these twistings of the strict truth are rather surprising. One of them is that the lion jumped quite through the crocodile, from jaw to tail tip, and as the lion's head appeared on its hurried journey, the Great Baron cut it off taking at least three feet of the crocodile's tail along with it. And, alas, so little respect has this fellow for the truth that he sometimes adds that as soon as the crocodile missed his tail, he turned upon the Brave Baron, seized the hunting-knife from his hand, and swallowed it in such haste that the blade pierced the creature's vitals and killed him instantly!

The little regard which this impudent knave has for truth sincerely told makes me sometimes fear that my real facts may fall under suspicion by being found in company with his annoying exaggerations. But I rest satisfied with the ready belief and generous sympathies of my younger readers, whose *imaginations*, at least, keep pace with my astonishing adventures.

Liars are indeed contemptible, and braggarts deserve no consideration; therefore, let us be strict in our observance of the truth and modest in our words and deeds. Thus may we deserve respect and then only achieve greatness.

CHAPTER II

In which the Baron makes a good shot — He loses his horse, but finds a wolf — Uses a wolf in place of a horse — The Baron promises his young Readers further wonderful adventures

CHAPTER II

THE lively fancy of your young minds will find no difficulty in following me from tropic climes to lands of ice and snow. Your wits and mine will run a rapid pace with neither fall nor doubting stumble.

My adventures have been varied as also have been the excursions of your adventurous imaginations. Therefore, I once set off from Rome on a journey to Russia in the midst of winter. I had a notion that frost and snow must, of course, improve the roads which every traveler had described as uncommonly bad through the northern parts of Germany, Poland, Courland, and Livonia. I went on horseback, as the least difficult manner of traveling. I was but lightly clothed and suffered greatly the more I advanced to the northeast. On my way I came upon a poor old man lying, shivering and lifeless, by the roadside. Scarcely a garment had he wherewith to cover his aged body. What must not the poor soul have suffered? Though I felt the severity of the weather myself, I pitied the poor creature and threw my cloak over him, and immediately I heard a voice of approval blessing me for that act of charity, saying:

"For this you will be rewarded, my son, in good time."

Onward I pursued my journey; night and darkness overtook me. No village was to be seen. The country was covered with snow, and I was unacquainted with the road.

Exceedingly weary, I alighted and fastened my horse to something that looked like a pointed stump of a tree which stood up above the snow. For the sake of safety I placed my pistols under my arms and lay down upon the snow, where I slept so soundly that I did not open my eyes till full daylight. Even you will not easily understand my astonishment to find myself lying in a churchyard in the midst of a village. My horse was not to be seen, but presently I heard him neigh somewhere above me. On looking upwards, I saw him hanging by his bridle to the weathercock of the church steeple.

My changed locality and the strange position of my horse were at first bewildering if not mysterious, but matters were soon very plain to me. The village had been covered with a heavy fall of snow. While I slept, a sudden change of weather had taken place, and the snow had melted. Slowly and gently I was lowered to the level of the churchyard; and what in the dark I had

taken to be a stump of a little tree above the snow proved to have been the top of the church weathercock. There hung my horse, high in the air.

Without thinking long, I took one of my pistols, shot the bridle in two, brought down the horse, and without further ado proceeded on my journey. (Here the Baron seems to have entirely lost his tender feelings for those in suffering or want. Certainly a good breakfast of corn for his horse, who had fasted so long and hung so high, would have been in keeping with the charitable deeds of which, but the night before, the Baron bravely boasted.)

My noble beast carried me well, advancing into the interior of Russia. I found going on horseback in those parts rather unfashionable in winter; therefore, I yielded, as I always do, to the customs of the country, took a single-horse sleigh, and drove briskly towards Saint Petersburg.

I do not exactly remember at the moment whether it was in Eastland or Jugemanland, but I do know that in the midst of a dreary forest I spied a terrible wolf making after me with all the speed of ravenous winter hunger. He soon overtook me. There was no way of escape. Without thought, I laid myself down flat in the sleigh, and let my horse run for our safety. The means

of escape I wished, but hardly hoped for or expected, happened immediately.

The wolf did not mind me in the least, but took a leap over me, falling furiously on my poor horse and beginning instantly to devour the animal. It was but natural that the horse ran the faster in anxious desire to escape a foe attacking so savagely from the rear. Being unnoticed and entirely safe myself, I lifted my head up slyly and with surprise beheld that the wolf had already half eaten my wildly galloping horse. So great was my horror and indignation that I fell upon him with the butt end of my whip. This unexpected attack from the rear frightened the creature so much that he leaped forward with all his might and hastily bolted the still undevoured half of my horse. In so doing, he had, of course, eaten his way into my beast's harness and found himself being properly drubbed by his new master. At a speed unknown in these parts, we arrived in full career in Saint Petersburg, each in a manner unexpected, and much to the astonishment of the many spectators who observed our entry into the town.

Thus ended another of my adventures. Though remarkable to those of less eventful lives, I look upon it as of little import compared with others which I shall tell you.

HE HAD, OF COURSE, EATEN HIS WAY INTO MY BEAST'S HARNESS

CHAPTER III

The Baron's nose, a door-post, and a new variety of fireworks — With one shot marvelously made the Baron bags many ducks — He leads a blind sow home by the tail — of another; and vanquishes a wild boar

CHAPTER III

YOU boys, who may envy my adventurous life, will understand my great desire to join the army, and you will sympathize with my longing for a commission. Both these ambitions were not promptly realized, and for several months I was perfectly at liberty to spend my time and money. Being young, you may easily imagine that I spent much of both out of town with such gallant fellows as knew how to make the most of sports of all kinds in an open forest country.

One morning I saw through the windows of my bedroom that a large pond not far off was covered with wild ducks. In an instant I took my gun from the corner, ran downstairs and out of the house in such blind haste that I carelessly struck my face against the doorpost. Such was the force of the blow that sparks flew from my eyes, but I assure you that this did not stop my sporting zeal. I soon came within shot of the ducks. Leveling my fowling-piece I observed to my sorrow that the flint used on all guns in those days had sprung from the cock or hammer. The violence of the shock

I had received had torn it from place. But there was no time to be lost. I instantly remembered the effect of a blow upon my head. I, therefore, hurriedly opened the powder-pan of my gun, and took careful aim at the wild fowls. At the same time with equal care I leveled a hearty punch at my right eye, which again drew sparks no flint could equal. The shot went off and I killed fifty brace of ducks, twenty widgeons, and three couple of teals. Truly, presence of mind is the soul of manly exercise and the key to proper sportsmanship. If soldiers and sailors owe to it many of their lucky escapes, hunters and sportsmen are not less beholden to it for many of their successes.

But it often happens that chance or good luck corrects our mistakes. Of this I soon had a fine example. One day when deep in the forest, I saw a wild pig followed so closely by another that the two seemed as one only. I fired, but missed, for the foremost pig ran away at fine speed, while the latter stood motionless as if fixed to the ground. On examining into the matter, I found the stationary animal was a very ancient sow, blind with age, which had taken hold of the other's tail and was thus led along with great success. As my bullet had severed the guiding tail, there was naught to do

HIS TUSKS PIERCED THE TREE

but stop and wait for the guiding pig to continue his helpful offices. I, therefore, laid hold of the remaining end of the pig's tail (still held firmly in the blind one's jaws) and led the old beast home without any further trouble on my part or any objection on the part of the blind sow.

Dangerous as these wild sows are, yet more terrible and fierce are the boars, one of which I once had the misfortune to meet in a forest when I was unarmed and unprepared for attack or defense. I retired behind an oak tree just as the furious animal leveled a side-blow at me with such force that his tusks pierced the tree, making him unable either to repeat the blow or run away.

Ho, ho! thought I, I shall soon have you now! Immediately I laid hold of a stone with which I hammered and bent his tusks in such a manner that he was well secured to the sturdy tree-trunk. He, therefore, awaited my return from the nearest village, where I went for ropes and a cart to secure him properly and carry him off safe and alive, in which I succeeded perfectly.

My young Readers will doubtless see that, even in the matter of adventures with pigs, the true sportsman never forgets to be a gentleman in action and a scholar in thoughtful proceedings.

CHAPTER IV

The value and great usefulness of presence of mind — A favorite hound and its virtues — The Baron is given a wonderful horse with which he performs remarkable feats

CHAPTER IV

Y young Readers' minds and spirits are awake to all that pertains to adventure and escape. You also are adventuring daily, either in imagination or in fact. All my narrow escapes were chances turned to advantage by presence of mind and vigorous exertion which went hand in hand with the wisdom of a gentleman and a soldier. I cannot bring too earnestly to your youthful attention the constant need of presence of mind if you would become fortunate sportsmen, brave soldiers, or fine sailors.

But let me add that you would be blamable and imprudent sportsmen, admirals, or generals, if you allowed yourselves to depend upon fortune, without troubling about the instruments of success, such as the proper arms, that ensure a happy ending to all adventures. I have always been remarkable for the excellency of my horses, dogs, guns, and swords, and for the proper manner of using and managing them. Upon the whole, I may hope to be remembered in the forest, upon the turf, and in the field.

I need not burden you here with all details of my

stables, kennel, or gun-racks, but, in justice to the worthy, I must mention a favorite greyhound. I never knew a better. She grew old in my service, and was not remarkable for her size, but rather for her swiftness. Had you seen her you would also have been filled with admiration. She ran so fast, so much, and so long in my service that she actually ran her legs off; and in the later days of her life I was obliged to use her only as a terrier. Having acquired the shortest legs, she was able to enter small holes and to pass beneath the lowest objects without inconvenience to herself. For ratting she was a marvel, and in this useful sport she served me many years.

I remember this, my wonderful hound, with the same pleasure and tenderness as I do a splendid Lithuanian horse which no money could have bought. He became mine by an accident, which gave me an opportunity of showing my horsemanship to a great advantage. I was at Count Przobossky's noble country house in Lithuania. I was enjoying tea with the ladies in the drawing-room while the gentlemen were down in the stable-yard, looking over a young horse of blood which had just arrived. We suddenly heard a noise of distress. I hastened downstairs and found the horse so unruly that

nobody dared approach or mount him. The most daring horsemen stood dismayed and aghast; despondency was expressed in every countenance. But I had no fear of the unmastered steed. With one leap I was on his back, and took him so much by surprise that I soon worked him into perfect gentleness and obedience, and this with the best display of horsemanship I was master of.

To plainly prove to the ladies my skill and victory, and at the same time desiring to spare them unnecessary trouble, I made my horse leap through one of the open windows of the tea-room. Around the room he walked, paced, trotted, and galloped, and at last I made him mount the tea-table, there to repeat his lessons in a pretty style which was exceedingly pleasing to the ladies, for he performed them amazingly well and did not break either cup or saucer.

This amusing and unusual performance placed me high in their opinion and so well in that of my noble host that, with his usual politeness, he begged that I would accept this young horse, and ride him at full speed to conquest and honor in the campaign against the Turks which was soon to be opened under command of Count Munich.

I could not, indeed, have been given a more agreeable present, nor a more suitable one, at the opening of that campaign in which I made my beginning as a soldier. A horse so gentle, so spirited, and so fierce, at once a lamb and a Bucephalus,[1] kept always in mind the deportment and duty of a soldier and a gentleman!

We took the field with the purpose of retrieving the character of the Russian arms, which had been somewhat blemished; and this we fully accomplished in several very fatiguing but glorious campaigns under command of that great general I mentioned before.

Modesty forbids me to claim for myself great successes or victories, the glory of which is generally claimed by the commander, or by kings, and even queens, who never smelt gunpowder. No, I do not claim any particular share of glory in the great battles with the enemy. I did my duty as a patriot, soldier, and gentleman, which in my esteem is the highest form of action, be it on the stricken field or quiet fireside.

However, having had the command of a body of hussars, I went upon several expeditions with unquestioned powers. Our success I think should be placed to

[1] The war-horse of Alexander the Great, famed for his beauty, strength, and speed.

my account and to that of the brave fellows whom I led on to conquest and victory. We had very hot work once in the van of the army, when we drove the Turks into Oczakow. My spirited Lithuanian almost brought me into a scrape. I had advanced considerably ahead of my hussars, and saw the enemy coming upon me in a cloud of dust which left me rather uncertain of their actual numbers and real intentions. To wrap myself in a similar cloud was common prudence, but would not have added to my knowledge, or served the end for which I had been sent out. Therefore, I let my flankers on both wings spread to right and left and make what dust they could, but I led on straight upon the enemy to have a nearer sight of them.

In this I was much gratified, for they stood and fought till, for fear of my flankers, they began to retreat in a disorderly manner. This was the moment to fall upon them with spirit. We broke them entirely, made terrible havoc among them, and drove them, not only back to a walled town in their rear, but even through the town, contrary to our most sanguine hopes.

The swiftness of my fine steed and my own usual presence of mind enabled me always to be first in the pursuit of our enemy who, I observed, was fairly flying

through the opposite gate of the city. I thought, however, it would be prudent to stop in the market-place to order my men into rest quarters, and, young Readers, there I stopped; but you may judge of my astonishment when I saw not one of my hussars about me in this market-place!

Were they scouring the other streets? What had become of them? They could not be far off and must soon join me. Feeling sure of their safe return, I walked my panting horse to a fountain in this market-place and let him drink. He drank uncommonly, and with an eagerness not to be satisfied, and I wondered greatly at the quantity of water he disposed of. No wonder, for when I looked around for my men, what should I see, young Readers? The hind part of my noble beast was missing! As fast as he drank, out poured the water. Though not refreshed, he seemed otherwise to suffer no inconvenience. A good horse is, indeed, a treasure beyond price.

How this strange accident could have happened was quite a mystery to me till I galloped to the town gate. There I saw that, when I rushed in after the fleeing enemy, they had dropped the portcullis (a heavy falling door, let down suddenly to prevent the entrance of an enemy

into a fortified town). This door, unperceived by me and unknown to my brave steed, had removed at one stroke a full half of him. But, unnatural and uncalled for as this accident may seem, the loss was not irreparable. My farrier was equal to the emergency. With great skill he sewed the two parts together with young shoots of laurel which were conveniently at hand, and the wound soon healed. The sprigs took root, grew up, and made a bower over me, so that afterwards I could go upon many other expeditions in the shade of my own and my horse's laurels.

This incident no doubt proves to you that unsought laurels oft reward and crown those whose deeds justly deserve a fitting tribute. Modesty, no matter how retiring, gains its rightful share of glory by means unseen and unexpected. I, therefore, recommend to those seeking praise that they first find modesty.

CHAPTER V

The Baron is made a prisoner of war — He keeps the Sultan's bees — He loses the bees, also loses a silver hatchet on the horn of the moon — Brings it back by an ingenious invention — The Baron falls to earth into a pit made by himself — Helps himself out of the pit — Extricates himself from trouble by the wayside — The wonderful effects of the frost upon his servant's French horn

CHAPTER V

I WAS not always as fortunate as my past narratives may lead you to suppose. Once I had the misfortune to be overpowered by numbers, and to be made a prisoner of war by the Turks, and, as is always usual among them, to be sold for a slave. In that state of humiliation my daily task was neither hard nor laborious, but rather singular and irksome. My work was to drive the Sultan's bees to their pasture-grounds, to attend to them all the day long, and to drive them back to their hives before sunset.

One evening I missed a bee, and soon observed that two ferocious bears had fallen upon her to tear her to pieces for the honey she carried. I had no weapon about me but a small silver hatchet, which is the badge of the Sultan's gardeners and farmers. I threw this at the bears with the intention of frightening them away and setting the poor bee at liberty; but, by an unlucky turn of my arm, the hatchet flew upwards and continued rising till it reached the moon. How should I recover it? Fortunately, I recollected that the Turkey-bean grows with great rapidity and climbs to an astonishing

height. I planted a bean immediately, and it grew until it actually fastened itself to one of the horns of the new moon. I had no more to do now but climb up by the beanstalk into the moon, where I arrived safely. It was a troublesome piece of business to find my silver hatchet in a place where everything has the brightness of silver. At last, however, I laid hold of it in a heap of chaff and chopped straw.

I was now for returning, but, alas! the heat of the sun had dried up my beanstalk. It was entirely useless for my descent, but I fell to work and twisted me a long rope of that chopped straw (an easy matter for one of my deftness and intelligence). This I fastened to one of the moon's horns and slid down to the end of it. Here I held myself fast with the left hand, and, with the hatchet in my right, I cut the long and now useless end of the upper part which, when tied to the lower end of the upper part, brought me a good deal nearer my journey's end. This repeated cutting and splicing and tying of the rope did not improve its quality, or bring me down to the Sultan's farm. I was still at least four or five miles from the earth when the rope broke, and I fell to the ground with such amazing violence that I found myself stunned, and in a hole fully fifty-four feet deep! Of

MY WORK WAS TO DRIVE THE SULTAN'S BEES TO THEIR PASTURE-GROUNDS

course, this hole was made by the weight of my body falling from so great a height. I recovered, however, but did not know how to get out of the hole my unfortunate accident had caused to be made. After some careful thought and wise planning, I dug steps in the earth with my finger-nails, which were fortunately both long and strong, and easily succeeded in reaching the surface of the earth.

Peace was soon after concluded with the Turks, and, having gained my liberty, I left immediately for Saint Petersburg. The winter was then so uncommonly severe all over Europe that ever since the sun has seemed frost-bitten.

My journey was made by post, and, finding myself in a narrow lane, I bid the postilion give a signal with his horn so that other travelers might not meet us in the narrow passage. He blew with all his might, but in vain; he could not make the horn sound. What could this silence mean, for French horns are noted for their ready willingness on all occasions? It was most unfortunate, for the moment after we found ourselves facing another coach coming in our direction. There was no proceeding. However, I got out of my carriage, and, being rather muscular, placed it, wheels and all, upon my head.

I then jumped a hedge about nine feet high, which, considering the weight of the coach, was somewhat difficult. But with little trouble I landed in a field and came out again by another jump into the road beyond the other carriage. I then went back for the horses, and, placing one upon my head and the other under my left arm, I brought them to my coach, and proceeded to an inn at the end of our day's run.

I should have told you that the horse under my left arm was very spirited, being not over four years old. In making my second jump over the hedge, he showed great dislike to that violent kind of motion by kicking and snorting. However, I tucked his hind legs into my coat pocket, and this settled his uneasiness completely.

After we arrived at the inn, my postilion and I refreshed ourselves, and he hung his horn on a peg by the kitchen fire, near which I sat. Suddenly we heard a *tereng! tereng! teng! teng!* We looked around and now found the reason why the postilion had not been able to sound his horn. His tunes were frozen up in the instrument, and came out now by thawing! All were plain, and much to the credit of my driver, who could give us various fashionable airs without further strain or effort to himself. A little of this music, however, was sufficient,

I THEN JUMPED A HEDGE ABOUT NINE FEET HIGH

for too frequent repetition of this sort would become a great nuisance, especially if frozen music was of the common sort. My young Readers may well be glad that no such soulless instrument need hang or stand by their hearths.

In conclusion of this portion of my narrative, I wish to state that some travelers are inclined to tell more than is perhaps strictly true. If you have the slightest doubt of my veracity, I can only say that I pity your lack of faith, and must request that you lay aside this chronicle before I begin a still more astounding part of my adventures, which are as strictly founded in fact as those I have already related.

CHAPTER VI

The Baron takes a bath in the Mediterranean Sea — He meets a surprising companion and hurries unexpectedly into heat and darkness — The Baron dances a horn-pipe with great success — He gives his deliverers a shock and a surprise and returns to shore

CHAPTER VI

THE number and variety of dangers to which the hardy adventurer is ever exposed is truly astonishing. Once I was in great danger of being lost in the Mediterranean in a singular and unexpected manner. I was taking a bath one summer's day in the sea near Marseilles when I beheld a large fish approaching me at great speed. His jaws were open wide, and I was directly in his path. There was no time to be lost, nor could I see any way to avoid him. With all possible speed I made myself as small as might be by putting my feet together and placing my hands close to my sides. In this position I had no difficulty in passing between his great jaws, and from this horrible portal directly into his stomach.

The place was exceedingly dark, but comfortably warm, as you may easily imagine. I was, indeed, a prisoner, with scant hopes of escape. At last it occurred to me that, by giving him food for thought of an unusual kind, he might be made glad to be rid of me. As I had plenty of room, I hit upon certain pranks that would surely set the creature to serious thinking, if not consid-

erable action. Accordingly I set to jumping, hopping, and skipping with great energy and athletic skill, and at last I fell to dancing the hornpipe. The quick motion of my feet in this active dance seemed to disturb him considerably, for his sudden fits and starts put me out of step. I continued my steps with renewed energy and grace until he roared horribly and stood up almost perpendicularly in the water, with his head and shoulders exposed. By this action he was discovered by sailors on board an Italian trading ship that chanced to be passing, and was at once harpooned.

As soon as he was hauled upon the ship's deck, I heard the crew consulting how they should best cut him up to preserve the greatest quantity of oil. I understood Italian and had the most horrible fears lest their knives used in this business should destroy me also. Therefore, I stood as near the center of the creature as possible, for there was room for a dozen men in this monster's insides. In this position I hoped to be fairly safe, for I believed the sailors would begin their carving at one or the other end of the fish.

My fears for my own safety, however, were soon relieved, when I saw their operations begun at a considerable distance from the position I had taken. Presently I

perceived a glimmering of light, and I called out lustily to be delivered from a situation in which I was now almost suffocated.

It is not possible for me to give you an idea of the astonishment which sat upon every face at hearing a voice come from a fish, but more so at seeing a man walk upright from the creature's carcass.

Of course, I immediately told the sailors the whole story as I have told it to you, my young Readers, and amazement struck them dumb.

After taking some much-needed refreshment, I jumped into the sea to be rid of the odor of fish which had always been displeasing to my rather refined and sensitive nostrils. With feelings of joy I swam to my clothes, which lay on the shore where I had left them four and a half hours before.

Thus ended an adventure which added to the sum of my many strange experiences and convinced me that a knowledge of lively steps of the dance might serve a soldier and gentleman as well as a humble mariner.

Therefore, let us not scorn manners and customs of those accounted beneath us. Adventure may at any moment place us in dilemmas when the minuet would serve us naught, while the lively but humble hornpipe would set our feet on the road to deliverance and safety.

CHAPTER VII

The Baron's adventures in Turkey, and upon the river Nile — He sees a balloon over Constantinople; shoots at and brings it down; finds an aerial traveler hanging from it — The Baron goes to Cairo on a secret mission and returns by way of the Nile — He is thrown into an unexpected dilemma and detained six weeks

CHAPTER VII

IT is good for those of mature years, as well as for youth, to enjoy the benefits of proper recreation. When in the service of the Turks, I found much satisfaction and benefit in boating. One morning, as my pleasure-barge drifted on the calm waters of the Sea of Marmora and I was admiring the beauty and serenity of the sky, I observed a round object in the air, far above me. It appeared to be about the size of a twelve-inch globe with something hanging from it.

I immediately seized my largest fowling-piece, from which I never allow myself to be separated if I can help it. With the utmost speed I loaded with ball and let fly at the globe, but to no purpose, the object being at too great a distance. I then put in a double charge of powder and five or six balls. This second attempt succeeded; my shot took effect and tore one side open, instantly bringing down my strange quarry. Judge my surprise when a most elegant gilt car, or balloon basket, with a man in it, fell within a few yards of me. Along with the man was part of a roast sheep. When I had recovered in some degree from my astonishment, I or-

dered my oarsman to row close to this strange aerial traveler.

I took this person aboard and found him to be confused and much put out by his sudden fall into the sea. In time, however, he recovered his wits sufficiently to give the following account of himself:

"About seven or eight days ago I ascended in my balloon from Land's End in Cornwall, England. With me I took a sheep for company. Unfortunately, the wind changed within ten minutes after my ascent, and, instead of driving inland as I had hoped and planned for, I was driven out to sea, over which I suppose I have continued ever since. Being continually at such great height, I could make no observations.

"The gnawing call of hunger pressed me and I was obliged on the third day of my flight to kill my sheep for food. I was at that time far above the moon, and for over sixteen hours after I was so near the sun that it scorched my eyebrows and singed my beard, of which I am justly proud. After first skinning my sheep, and taking care to place it where the balloon did not shade it from the sun, I provided well-roasted mutton in about two hours. This has been my only food ever since. The cause of my long flight was due to the failure of a string

which was fixed to a valve in the balloon. Sir, I owe my rescue to your marksmanship. Had you not fired at and rent a hole in the balloon, I might, like Mahomet, have been suspended between heaven and earth till doomsday."

What later befell this aerial adventurer I have no memory. Allow me to continue upon other subjects of greater import. The Grand Seignior of Constantinople soon employed me to negotiate a matter of great importance at Cairo. I cannot reveal my errand, for it was of such a nature that it must ever remain a secret.

I journeyed in great state by land, and, having completed the business entrusted to me with tact and great wisdom, I dismissed all but a few attendants and started homeward in the guise of a private gentleman. The weather was delightful, and that famous river, the Nile, was beautiful beyond all description. In short, I was tempted to make my journey by barge, and descend the river to Alexandria.

On the third day of my voyage the river began to rise most amazingly. Of course, you have heard of the annual overflow of the Nile. The next day it covered the whole country for many leagues on each side! On the fifth day at sunrise my boat became entangled with

what I first took for shrubs, but as the light grew stronger, I discovered myself to be surrounded by almonds, which were perfectly ripe and in the highest perfection.

Upon casting out a line and lead, my people found we were at least sixty feet from the ground and unable to advance or retreat. At eight or nine o'clock, the wind suddenly rose, and tilted our barge over on one side, spilling us all into the water. Fortunately, we saved ourselves (six men and two boys) by clinging to the tree. In this situation we continued for six weeks and three days, living upon almonds. I need not inform you that we had plenty of water. On the forty-second day of our distress the water fell as suddenly as it had risen, and on the forty-sixth day we were able to venture down to firm earth. Our barge was the first and most pleasing object we saw, about two hundred yards from the spot where she sunk. After drying everything that was useful by the heat of the sun, and loading ourselves with necessary stores, we set out to recover lost ground. We found by the closest calculations that we had been carried over garden walls and all kinds of enclosures fully a hundred and fifty miles into the interior country.

In four days, after a very tiresome journey on foot,

with thin shoes, we reached the river which was now confined to its banks. In six days more we arrived at Alexandria, where we took ship for Constantinople.

I was kindly received by the Grand Seignior, who commended me for the valor, foresight, and gallant endurance a gentleman always displays in times of distress and difficulty.

CHAPTER VIII

The Baron crosses the Thames without bridge or boat or balloon or even his own will — He rouses from a long nap — He destroys a monster — The Baron tells of important adventures — He visits Mount Ætna and drops in upon Vulcan and Cyclops — He is rudely dismissed, and falls through the earth to the South Sea

CHAPTER VIII

EFORE relating to my young Readers in this chapter a series of adventures of great importance, I desire to tell of one that is more amusing than necessary to my veracious chronicle.

On one of my first visits to England, I had occasion to go down to Wapping to see some goods that I was sending to friends in Hamburg. After that business was over, I took the Tower Wharf on my way back. Here I found the sun very powerful, and I was so much fatigued that I stepped into one of the cannons to rest and compose myself. At about noon I fell fast asleep. At one o'clock all the Tower Wharf cannons were discharged. They had all been loaded that morning, but of this I had no knowledge or suspicion. The combined report of the many pieces was terrific. I was shot from my own particular gun, over houses, trees, and walls on the opposite side of the river, into a farmer's yard.

I fell upon a large haystack without waking; indeed, I continued there in sound sleep for three months. At the end of this time hay became so very dear that the

farmer found it to his interest to send his stock to market. The stack I was reposing upon was the largest in the yard and this was the one they began to load first.

I was awakened by the voices of the people who had ascended the ladders to begin removing the hay from the top of the stack. I got up hastily, totally ignorant of my situation. So great was my surprise that, in an attempt to run away, I fell upon the farmer to whom the hay belonged with such force and weight that he was instantly killed. I sustained no injuries, however, but might have felt the pangs of regret had I not learned that this fellow was a most detestable character, always keeping the produce of his farm for extravagant market prices and until his neighbors could ill afford to pay what he exacted.

I will now pass on to the more serious and important adventures mentioned at the outset of this chapter. I do so with pleasure, knowing that my young Readers will be benefited, not only by what they add to their store of useful knowledge, but by the exercise of imagination they will have in following adventures so marvelous and enlightening.

After reading Mr. Brydone's "Travels in Sicily" with great pleasure, I determined to pay a visit myself to Mount Ætna. My voyage there brought no experience

worth mentioning. One morning, three or four days after my arrival, I set out on foot, determined to explore the internal parts of the mountain, even if I perished in the attempt.

After three hours of the most difficult climbing, I found myself at the top. The mountain was then, and had been for over three weeks, in violent eruption. I walked around the edge of the crater, making such observations as were possible. Not being satisfied, and desiring a closer view of the inner workings of the volcano, I jumped into the crater, of course, feet foremost.

'T is needless to tell you that I soon found myself in a warm berth, in which my body was bruised and burned in many places by the red-hot cinders which rose with terrific violence and opposed my descent. However, my weight soon brought me to the bottom of the crater, where I found myself in the midst of great noise and clamor, mixed with the turmoil of enraged voices. Imagine, young Readers, my astonishment when I found that I was in the company of Vulcan and his Cyclops. I had rudely broken into their workshop as a violent quarrel was at its height. This trouble had lasted for three weeks, which accounted for the continued volcanic eruptions seen and felt by the outer world. Upon my arrival, peace

was restored, and Vulcan himself did me the honor of applying plasters to my wounds, which healed immediately.

Vulcan then gave me a very brief but clear account of Mount Ætna, which he said was, in truth, nothing more than a big pile of ashes thrown from his forge. He was often obliged to punish his fellow-workers, at whom he made it a practice to throw red-hot coals. His people dodged and parried his missiles with great dexterity, or threw the pieces up into the world to put them beyond their master's reach.

"Our quarrels," added Vulcan, "sometimes last three or four months, and these appearances of lava and cinders in the world above are what you mortals call eruptions. Mount Vesuvius is another of my workshops. I have a passage under the sea leading directly to it, where frequently quarrels occur like to the one you have just seen, causing similar eruptions."

You can readily understand that one of my adventurous turn found Vulcan not only a sympathetic companion, but a stalwart champion of my powers and wisdom. I should have continued in his shops as an attendant had not some jealous tattlers, who delighted in mischief, whispered a false tale in Vulcan's ear. He was roused to

a fit of anger not to be appeased. Without the least notice, he took me under his arm and carried me to what appeared to be a well with a wide mouth. Over this he held me at arm's length, saying, "*Ungrateful mortal, return to the world whence you came.*"

Without giving me the least opportunity to reply, he dropped me down the center of the well. I found myself falling with increasing speed, till horror and fright deprived me of my senses. I did not recover until I plunged into a large body of water lighted by the rays of the sun.

CHAPTER IX

The Baron takes an unexpected plunge — Arrives on an island of cheese, surrounded by milk — The Baron tells of extraordinary objects — The trees pay tribute to the Baron and his party

CHAPTER IX

THE plunge I so hastily made was indeed more surprising to me than the telling of it could possibly be to you, my admiring Readers. From my earliest infancy, I was a remarkable swimmer and was skilled in many water tricks. I found myself in a cooling paradise, considering the horrors I had just been released from. Looking about me, I could see nothing but a vast expanse of sea, spreading forth in every direction. I also found my moist surroundings very cold compared with Master Vulcan's workshop.

At last I observed at some distance an object of amazing magnitude, like a huge rock, approaching me, and presently discovered it to be a mass of floating ice. I swam around it till I came to a spot where I could ascend to the top, which I did, but not without some difficulty. I was still out of sight of land, and despair filled me with dreadful thoughts. However, before night came on I saw a sail, which my mountain of ice approached with great speed. When within a very short distance, I hailed the ship in German. They answered in Dutch. I then

flung myself into the sea, and was promptly hauled on board. I now inquired where we were, and was told that we were in the great Southern Ocean. Marvelous! It was evident that I had dropped from Mount Ætna through the center of the earth, and had come out at the South Sea! With the Captain's permission, I took some refreshments and a rest, which no one doubted I fully deserved.

Our ship was, at that time, exactly in Captain Cook's first track, and we arrived next morning at Botany Bay, a place favored by the English as a haven for all sorts of felons. We remained here but seventy-two hours. On the fourth day after our departure, a most dreadful storm arose which soon destroyed all our sails, splintered our bowsprit, and brought down the topmast, which fell upon the box that held our compass, shattering both beyond repair. We were now at a loss where to steer. At length the storm abated, but a steady and brisk gale followed that drove us at least forty knots an hour for six months!

After this we noted an amazing change in our surroundings. Our spirits grew light as our noses were regaled with the most delightful odors imaginable. The sea had changed in color from its natural blue, or deep

green, to white! Very soon after these wonderful changes, we saw land and a safe inlet at no great distance. Up this inlet we sailed for nearly sixty leagues, and found it always wide and deep, flowing with milk of the most delicious taste.

It was finally decided that we should land. We then found the place to be an island consisting of one large *cheese*. The composition of the island might not have become known (many of our party being Dutch) had not one of our men fainted the moment we came ashore. This man always had a great dislike for cheese and was most sensitive to its odor or proximity. Upon regaining his senses, he insisted upon our removing the cheese that clung like mud upon his feet. After careful examination we found him to be entirely right, for the whole island, as I have before told you, was nothing but a cheese of immense magnitude. Therefore, we cannot say that those sensitive to the aroma of cheese are useless in fields of science and discovery. For myself, however, I commend those robust natures and noses that remain unmoved and undaunted under all stress, whether it be the odor of cheese or the rigor of battle.

On this island of cheese the natives are very numerous, and their principal food is the island itself. This

they consume in great quantities, but the eaten part grows again at night as fast as it is consumed by day. There seemed to be plenty of vines, with bunches of large grapes which, upon being pressed, yielded nothing but milk. We saw the inhabitants running races upon the surface of the milk. They did not sink at all, but ran and walked upon this delicate liquid as we do upon a lawn or bowling-green. They were upright and comely figures, nine feet high, with three legs and but one arm. Upon the whole they are graceful in form and carriage.

Among the many marvels of this island, there grows a great plenty of corn, the ears of which produce loaves of bread, baked, and ready for eating.

After thirty-eight days of tedious journey, we arrived on the side of the island opposite to that on which we had landed. There we found, much to the delight of some of our party, great quantities of blue-mould from which sprang all kinds of rich fruit, such as peaches, apricots, nectarines, and many other delicious fruits with which we were not acquainted.

In the fruit trees, which are of great size, there were many birds' nests, among them a kingfisher's nest of enormous size. It was at least as large as the dome of

WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY WE CUT OPEN ONE OF THESE EGGS

Saint Paul's Church in London. We found upon inspection that this nest was made of huge trees curiously woven together. There were — let me see (*for I make it a rule always to speak with exactness*) — there were over five hundred eggs in this nest, and each was as large as eight barrels. We could not only see the young birds within the eggs, but plainly hear their chirping. With great difficulty we cut open one of these eggs, and let out an unfeathered young one. He was much larger than twenty full-grown vultures.

Just as we had given this youngster his freedom, the mother kingfisher lighted, and, seizing our Captain in one of her claws, flew with him more than a mile into the air. After a few turns in mid-air she let the Captain drop into the sea, but not till she had very thoroughly cuffed his ears with her wings. Dutchmen are natural floaters, and often good swimmers, and the victim of Mistress Kingfisher's wrath soon joined us.

On our return trip, we took a different route. When we had come within two days' journey of our ship, we observed three men hanging by their heels to a tall tree. Asking the cause of their punishment, I was told that they had all been travelers, and upon their return home had deceived their friends by describing people and

places they had really never seen, also relating things that had never happened. This gave me no concern, *as I have ever confined myself to facts.*

As soon as we arrived on board ship, we weighed anchor and set sail from this extraordinary country. As we drew away from the island, all the trees upon the shore paid their respects to us twice, bowing in exact time, and immediately taking their former posture again, which was quite erect.

From all that we could learn of this CHEESE, it was considerably larger than the continent of Europe!

CHAPTER X

The Baron's ship passes between the teeth of a fish unknown in this part of the world — They have great difficulty in escaping from the interior regions of this monster — They arrive in the Caspian Sea — The Baron starves a bear — A marvelous waistcoat

CHAPTER X

EING still without a compass, we sailed whither we knew not for three months. These were dreary days, indeed, until we arrived in a sea that appeared to be almost black. Upon tasting the water, we found it to be a most excellent wine, and much trouble we had keeping the sailors from too frequent drafts of a beverage so close at hand and abundant.

In a few hours, however, our attention was drawn to vast numbers of whales and other creatures of enormous size, which completely surrounded us. One of these monsters was far too large for the eye to judge of, or for human mind to comprehend. Since we did not see him until we were very close to his enormous and wide-open jaws, our ship, with all masts standing and with sails full set, was drawn straight into his mouth. Inward we passed between his teeth, which were much larger and taller than the masts of a fourth-rate man-of-war.

After we had been in his mouth some time, he opened it very wide, took in an immense quantity of water and floated our vessel (which was of no mean size) down into his stomach. Here we lay as quiet as at anchor in a

dead calm. The air about us was rather warm and not as fragrant as might be desired, but, having recently experienced the zephyrs of Cheese Island, we found little difficulty in becoming accustomed to the atmosphere of our captor's interior regions.

Hardy endurance, learned early, never succumbs. Cheerful hardihood ever enlivens serious endeavor: Maxims such as these are worthy of thoughtful consideration by young and old.

We soon discovered that the creature in whom we were imprisoned had swallowed anchors, cables, boats, and barges in abundance, and also a number of ships, some laden and some not. Of course, we were in complete darkness, and everything had to be done by torchlight. There was no sun, no moon, no planet, from which to make observations. Everything was afloat or aground twice a day; when the creature drank, it became high water; and again we found ourselves stranded high out of water.

On the second day of our confinement in these regions of darkness, I ventured, at low water as we called it, to ramble with the Captain and a few of the other officers. All of our party carried torchlights. We met with people of all nations, to the number of about ten

OUR SHIP, WITH ALL MASTS STANDING AND WITH SAILS FULL SET, WAS DRAWN STRAIGHT INTO HIS MOUTH

thousand. We found that they were going to hold a council to discover how to recover their liberty. Some of these poor prisoners had been in the animal's stomach several years. I was chosen chairman, and the first thing I did was to propose splicing two mainmasts together, and, the next time the whale opened his mouth, to be ready to wedge them in between his jaws, and so prevent his shutting them. My plan was unanimously approved.

One hundred stout men were chosen for this service, and we had scarcely prepared our masts properly when our opportunity came. The monster opened his mouth, and immediately the top of the mast was placed against the upper jaw and the other end upon the lower. In this way we prevented the shutting of the animal's mouth.

As soon as everything in his inside region was well afloat, we manned a few boats and rowed ourselves into the light of the outer world. The daylight, after three months' confinement in total darkness, cheered our spirits surprisingly. When we had taken leave of this enormous animal, we mustered a fleet of ninety-five ships, all of which had been in this confined situation.

Having gained our liberty, our first object was to discover what part of the world we were in. At last it

was learned that we were in the Caspian Sea! How we came here it was impossible to understand, this sea, as you know, having no communication with any other great body of water. One of the inhabitants of Cheese Island, who accompanied me as a body-servant, accounted for it thus: the monster, in whose stomach we had been so long confined, had carried us here by way of some underground passage. However, we pushed to shore, and I was the first who landed.

Just as I put my foot upon the ground, a large bear leaped upon me with his front paws. I caught one in each hand, and squeezed them both so that he cried out lustily. In self-defense I was obliged to hold him thus until he starved to death. It is seldom that I am compelled to take such advantage of an adversary, but you must acknowledge that the bear gave me good cause for my action.

From this place I journeyed to Saint Petersburg a second time. Here an old friend gave me a most excellent pointer. I had the misfortune, however, soon to lose this fine dog through a blundering sportsman, who fired at him instead of a covey of partridges. From the faithful creature's skin I had a waistcoat made, which always leads me to game if I go hunting in the proper

SQUEEZED THEM BOTH SO THAT HE CRIED OUT LUSTILY

season. When I come within shot, *one of the buttons flies off and lodges upon the spot where the game is;* when the birds rise I never miss them.

One day a covey of partridges rose after a button had fallen amongst them. They came from the ground in a line, one before the other, and flew directly towards me. I had loaded my gun, but had forgotten to remove my ramrod. I fired, and the ramrod passed straight through the birds, the rod being so hot from the burning powder that my leash of birds was completely roasted before I reached home.

Thus, my young Readers, ends another chapter of my remarkable adventures. I have related all with a strict regard for truth, and a great desire that my courage and endurance may serve as an example to you, should similar adventures come to you now or hereafter.

CHAPTER XI

The Baron pays a visit during the siege of Gibraltar — Sinks a Spanish man-of-war — Destroys all the enemy's cannon — Saves the lives of two English officers with a marvelous sling and raises the siege

CHAPTER XI

AM sure my young Readers will be pleased with this chapter of my adventures in which I relate further experiences in my career as a soldier. During the siege of Gibraltar, I sailed with Lord Rodney's fleet with the intention of seeing my old friend General Elliot. Time cannot fade the laurels won by his gallant defense of that fortress.

After the usual joy which attends the meeting of old friends, I went to examine the garrison and to view the operations of the enemy. My friend the General accompanied me. I had brought with me a most excellent telescope which was purchased by me in London. By the help of this fine instrument, I discovered the enemy was going to discharge a thirty-six-pounder at the exact spot where we stood. I told the General what they were about; he looked through the glass also and found me to be right. With his permission I immediately ordered a forty-eight-pounder to be brought from a nearby battery. Having long studied the art of gunnery, I placed and aimed the gun with so much exactness that I was sure of my mark.

With my usual wisdom, caution, and presence of mind, I watched the enemy till I saw the match placed at the touch-hole of their piece. At that very instant I gave order for our gun to be fired also.

Attend, young Readers, to the marvelous result of my foresight and prompt action! Midway between the two pieces of cannon, the balls struck each other with amazing force, and the effect was astounding!

The enemy's ball recoiled and flew back with such violence as to kill the man who had discharged it, not to mention sixteen others which it met in its progress to the Barbary coast. Deadly projectile!

Continuing with unchecked force, it tore through the masts of three vessels that then lay in a line behind each other in the harbor, and, though much spent in speed by this time, it broke into the roof of a laborer's hut about two hundred yards inward and completely demolished the wig of an old woman who lay asleep on the floor of the hut. The ball was afterwards found deeply embedded in the heart of a neighboring pigsty.

Our ball, too, did excellent service, for it not only repelled the other in the manner I have described, but, continuing its course, dismounted the very piece of cannon that had just been used against us and drove it into

the hold of the ship, where it fell with so much force as to break its way through the bottom. The ship filled immediately and sank with a thousand Spanish sailors, besides a considerable number of soldiers on board.

You will surely acknowledge this to be an extraordinary exploit. I will not, however, take the whole credit to myself. My good judgment was the greater reason for success, but chance assisted me a little, for I afterward found that the man who loaded our forty-eight-pounder put in, by mistake, a double charge of powder. Had he done otherwise we might not have succeeded so far beyond all expectation in repelling the enemy's ball.

General Elliot would have given me an exalted commission for this piece of service, but I declined everything except his thanks, which I received at a crowded table of officers at a supper on the evening of that very day.

As I am very partial to the English, who are beyond question a brave people, I determined not to take my leave of the garrison till I had rendered them another service. In about three weeks an opportunity presented itself. I dressed myself in the habit of a priest, and at one o'clock in the morning stole out of the garrison, passed the enemy's lines, and soon arrived in the midst

of their camp. Here I entered the tent in which was the Prince d'Artois, with the commander-in-chief and several other officers, who were in deep council over a plan to storm our garrison next morning.

My disguise was a complete protection, and I was allowed to remain in the tent, hearing everything that passed till they went to their several beds. I then discovered the whole camp and even the sentinels were wrapped in the arms of Morpheus — such sleep is always deep and exceedingly satisfying to those so occupied.

I began my work, which was that of dismounting all their cannon (over three hundred pieces), from forty-eight to twenty-four-pounders, and throwing them into the sea. Having no assistance, I found this the hardest task I ever undertook, except swimming to the opposite shore with a famous Turkish cannon of great weight, of which exploit I may tell you at some future time.

With patience and strength fortified by courage and skill, I piled all the gun-carriages together in the center of the camp. To prevent the noise of the wheels being heard, I carried them in pairs under my arms. A noble pile they made, as high, at least, as the Rock of Gibraltar. I then lighted a match by striking a flintstone, which was twenty feet from the ground, with the breech of an iron

forty-eight-pounder, and I set fire to the whole pile. To add fitting fuel to this glorious flame, I threw all the enemy's ammunition wagons on the top.

Before using the match, it is needless to say that I had wisely laid the combustibles at the bottom of the pile so that the whole was ablaze in a moment. To prevent suspicion, I was one of the first to express surprise. You may imagine that the whole camp was shocked with astonishment, and the opinion was that their sentinels had been bribed and that seven or eight regiments of our garrison had been employed in this great destruction of their artillery. As a result of my bravery and judgment, the Count d'Artois and all his attendants took such speedy flight that they never stopped until they reached Paris. This dreadful conflagration had such an effect upon them that they could take no food or refreshment for at least three months.

One morning, about two months after I had done the English this service, when I was sitting at breakfast with General Elliot, a shell entered the room in which we were. To my horror the missile lodged upon our table. As most men would do, the General quitted the place immediately; but I took up the shell before it burst and carried it to the top of Gibraltar's rock. Looking over

the enemy's camp from this height I saw a considerable number of people. Using my telescope, I discovered that two of our officers, one a general and one a colonel (who doubtless had been made prisoners), were in a dire plight. They were actually going to be executed on the gibbet.

Alas, I found the distance too great to throw the shell with my hand, but, very fortunately, I recollected that I had a most miraculous sling in my pocket. Into this I placed the shell and threw it into the midst of the executioners. It burst as it fell, destroying all present but the two prisoners, who were saved by being hung so high. However, one piece of the shell flew with such force against the foot of the gibbet that it was shattered and fell to the ground.

Our two friends no sooner touched firm earth (*terra firma*) than they ran down to the seashore, seized a Spanish boat with two men in it, and made them row to one of our own ships, which they did in complete safety.

A few moments later, as I was relating my action to General Elliot, the rescued officers both appeared and took us by the hand. After mutual congratulations, we retired to spend the rest of the day in well-won festivities.

Though fully aware of my own bravery on this occasion, I do not wish my young Readers to think that I ever allowed pride to conceal the modesty with which I am justly credited, and I warn you to be ever alert in telling the strict truth without regard to personal satisfaction or shallow glory that tends to swell self-esteem.

CHAPTER XII

The Baron tells more of his wonderful sling — The Baron's father narrates adventures with a sea-horse — A deadly battle between lobsters and crabs — The Baron's father sells his marine steed for a large sum — The Baron makes observations of his own upon bravery

CHAPTER XII

I CAN see by your faces, my dear young Readers, that you wish to hear further about my treasure of a sling that served me and others so notably. My father was possessor of this wonderful instrument before it came into my possession. One day he was walking by the seashore at Harwich. The sling was in his pocket. Before his paces had covered a mile, he was attacked by a fierce animal called a sea-horse. Open-mouthed, terrible, and in great fury, the beast ran at him. My respected father hesitated for a moment in very natural fear and bewilderment, but, recollecting his sling, he soon recovered. Cautiously retreating about a hundred yards, he stooped for a couple of pebbles, placed them carefully, and slung them both so dexterously at the animal that a stone smote the creature over each eye. So great was the blow that the animal's eyes were immediately closed, as is often, in cases of fisticuffs, common in English sporting circles. Thus the furious beast became entirely manageable. My father now got upon his back and drove him into the sea. The sling was placed as a bridle in his mouth, and he was

thus driven with the greatest ease across the ocean, by way of the sea's bottom. In less than three hours, they both arrived on the opposite shore, which is about thirty leagues distant.

My father was a man of wisdom, distinction, and great repute, and it seems fitting that I should repeat his very words that tell of this adventure at the bottom of the sea:

"On my arrival at Helvoetsluys," said my father, "the natives observed that I breathed with some difficulty, and I informed them that the animal on whose back I rode from Harwich did not swim. My beast was of a peculiar disposition and form, and could not float or move up on the surface of the water or swim like a fish in the surrounding sea. With incredible swiftness, however, he galloped across the sea's bottom from shore to shore, driving millions of fish before him. Many and varied were the fish I observed, the most peculiar variety being those who carried their heads on the very ends of their tails. [Doubtless it is difficult for my young Readers to conceive of a sea-monster so peculiar, and I have no doubt that you are uncertain in which direction such a fish found it most convenient to swim. Rest content, however, in the reliability of my father's tale, as well as the

HE GALLOPED ACROSS THE SEA'S BOTTOM

fish, because the former is noted for his strict observance of the truth, and the latter will not dispute my father's statement, whichever way they navigate the ocean waters.]

"As my journey progressed," continued my respected parent, "I came upon a prodigious range of rocks equal in height to the Alps, on the sides of which was a great variety of tall and noble trees, loaded with marine fruit such as lobsters, crabs, oysters, and scallops, some of which were a cart-load each in size and weight! The lobster trees appeared the richest, but the crab and oyster trees were the tallest.

"While my salt-water Pegasus galloped over the peak of an extremely precipitous mountain, a wrecked ship, sinking from the surface of the sea, fell upon the steep sides of the mountain and in its course downward dragged both lobsters and crabs in great numbers from their respective trees. Great enmity seems to exist between these two varieties. Being so rudely disturbed, and each believing the other to be the cause of the annoyance, they fell upon each other with great violence. A terrific battle followed in which many thousands were slaughtered.

"It was with difficulty that I escaped injury, as I was caught in the midst of this savage horde of deadly en-

emies. Added to this, my situation was in other ways unpleasant. I met many large fish who were not only able, but greatly desired to devour us. As my steed's eyes had not yet recovered from the blows I had given, I found the attacks of these hungry creatures difficult to meet and overcome alone. But, as I have already related, my marvelous journey ended in safety for me, and I sold my Pegasus to a Hollander for seven hundred ducats, which was upwards of three hundred pounds. You will doubtless rejoice also to know that my strange steed fully recovered, not only from my sling's blow, but also from the hard gallop under seas!"

After reading my father's narrative, young and enthusiastic Readers will be doubly interested in adventures of my own, which naturally excel in marvels even those of a person as unusual as my honored parent. Traits of nature that make a brave soldier, a gallant gentleman, and a great sportsman, are only increased in perfection when inherited from noble forbears.

CHAPTER XIII

The Baron tells of adventures on a voyage to North America which are worthy of his young Readers' attention — The pranks of a monstrous whale — A sea-gull saves the life of a sailor — The Baron's head is forced amidships — The Baron stops a serious leak in an unusual manner

CHAPTER XIII

MY young Readers will be interested in the adventure that I shall now tell, because it describes other situations and conditions than heretofore narrated. None the less, however, you will admire my fortitude, and marvel at dilemmas in which I was placed.

I once embarked at Portsmouth in a first-rate English man-of-war of one hundred guns and fourteen hundred men. We set a straight course for North America. Nothing worth relating happened till we arrived within three hundred leagues of the river Saint Lawrence, when the ship struck with amazing force against what we supposed to be a rock. However, upon heaving the lead, we could find no bottom, even with three hundred fathom of line. There seemed to be no sea-bottom, and yet we had struck something with such violence that the shock rent the rudder off completely, broke our bowsprit in the middle, and split all our masts from top to bottom, two of which went by the board. One poor sailor, who was aloft furling the main-sheet, was flung at least three leagues from the ship. Fortunately, the fellow saved his life by laying hold of the tail of a large sea-gull who

brought him back and left him on the very spot from whence he had been thrown.

Another proof of the violence of the shock was the force with which those between decks were driven against the floors above them. My head met the ceiling of my cabin with such terrific force that it was driven almost to the place of my stomach, where it continued for some months before it recovered its natural place upon my shoulders. While we were all in a state of astonishment and confusion, the disaster was suddenly explained by the appearance of a large whale that had been asleep within sixteen feet of the surface of the water. This animal was much displeased with the disturbance which our ship had given him. In our passage we had scratched his nose with our rudder. His rage was, indeed, terrible and his revenge instant and terrifying. With a blow of his tail he stove in all the gallery and part of the quarter-deck. Then, turning upon us, he took between his teeth the main-sheet anchor which was, of course, suspended from the head, as it usually is. Off he drove with the ship at a speed surely exceeding twelve leagues an hour. Fortunately, after dragging the ship and her defenseless passengers for at least sixty leagues, the cable broke and we lost both whale and anchor.

However, upon our return voyage to Europe some months later, we came upon the same whale within a short distance from the very spot where we had lost him. He was dead and floating upon the water. After careful measurement we found the monster to be half a mile in length. As we could take but a small quantity of such a mammoth creature on board, we got our boats out and, with much difficulty, cut his head off. To our joy we found the anchor in his mouth, along with about forty fathom of our cable. I have no doubt that, added to the pain and humiliation of a scratched nose, the creature found a diet of anchor and cable so unpalatable that his death took place forthwith.

The recovery of the ship's anchor was the only incident of interest that happened on our return voyage. One part of our distress, however, I had almost forgotten to tell you. While the whale was running away with the ship, she sprung a leak. The water poured in so fast that all our pumps could not keep us from sinking. It was, however, my good fortune to be first to discover the danger that threatened to overwhelm us. I found a large hole in the ship's bottom, considerably over a foot in diameter! It gives me great happiness and affords me cause for pride to tell you that our noble vessel was saved,

with all its crew, by a most fortunate example of my presence of mind. Quick action in times of danger is also wisdom's surest weapon. With no thought of my own comfort, I instantly sat upon the rent in the ship's bottom and completely stopped the leak. I need not state that such sacrifice added to my discomfort. The position in which I was placed was both cold and wet, but who, during acts of bravery, considers personal inconvenience? Presently the carpenter came to my rescue and with his art completed the work I had so bravely begun.

CHAPTER XIV

The Baron tells of a frolic — Saint Paul's clock strikes thirteen — Windsor Castle — College of Physicians — Undertakers, sextons, and apothecaries almost ruined

CHAPTER XIV

THIS chapter of my adventures will be brief, but it is necessary to record one more of the marvels done by my famous sling, which makes its possessor equal to any task he is desirous of performing. The tale I shall now tell smacks somewhat of being a frolic rather than a glorious adventure — more suited to one of my nature and desires. But my young friends will be first to understand the need and pleasure of sprightly entertainment.

On a certain occasion I made a balloon so large that an account of the silk it contained would exceed all belief. Every silk merchant's shop in London, Westminster, and Spitalfields contributed to it, and with this aerial monster and my sling I played many pranks and found much harmless entertainment.

Once I took a good-sized house from its place and put it in another without disturbing the inhabitants, who were too soundly asleep to notice the wanderings of this habitation.

On another occasion my dexterity made the sentinel on watch at Windsor Castle hear the clock at Saint Paul's

strike *thirteen*. This was accomplished by removing Windsor Castle from its place and setting it down close to Saint Paul's. This was done at exactly midnight and at the stroke of twelve, at which moment the sentinel was sufficiently awake to count the twelve strokes. Falling asleep an instant after, he slept for sixty minutes and awoke as Saint Paul's clock struck one. Being entirely unconscious of his nap for a full hour, the thirteen strokes seemed to the sentinel to be in exact order. Therefore, in the morning he hastened to report the misbehavior of Saint Paul's clock. It is not recorded, however, that his habits of sleep became known or in any way accounted for the story he told.

With no difficulty I carried the castle back to its proper place before daylight and without waking any of the dwellers. Of course I need not state that the sentinel slept out his watch with his usual loyalty and devotion.

At another time, on the thirtieth of September, when the College of Physicians elected their annual officers and dined sumptuously together, I filled my balloon, brought it over the dome of the College, and clapped my sling around the golden ball at the top. Hitching the other end of my sling securely to the basket of my

balloon, I immediately rose with the whole college to an immense height, where I kept the wise Doctors for upwards of three months.

You will naturally inquire what they did for food such a length of time? To this I answer that had I kept them suspended twice the time, they would have suffered no inconvenience on that account. Their dinner-table on this imposing occasion was so amply or rather extravagantly spread that their feasting might have lasted indefinitely.

Though this feat of mine was meant as an innocent frolic, it caused much mischief to many respectable characters among the clergy, undertakers, sextons, and builders of tombstones. These were, it must be acknowledged, the only sufferers. It is a well-known fact that during the three months the college was suspended in the air, there was little illness below them. Though unable to attend their patients, no deaths happened except a few who fell before the scythe of Father Time. It is also said that, if the apothecaries had not been very active during the above time, half the undertakers, in all probability, would have been bankrupt.

CHAPTER XV

The Baron sails with Captain Phipps, attacks two large bears, and has a narrow escape — Gains the confidence of the animals and guides them on board ship — The Baron makes many gifts and is highly honored — The Baron acquits Captain Phipps of neglect of duty

CHAPTER XV

I TRUST you have all heard of Captain Phipps, a gentleman of distinction as well as a brave and capable sailor. On his last voyage of discovery to the north, I accompanied the Captain, not as an officer but a private friend. When we arrived in high northern latitude, I was viewing the objects around me with the telescope which I introduced to you in my Gibraltar adventure. I thought I saw two large white bears in savage combat upon a great body of ice considerably higher than the masts of our ship. They seemed to be about two miles distant. I immediately took my carbine, slung it across my shoulder, and proceeded to climb the mass of ice.

When I arrived at the top, the unevenness of the surface made my approach to the bears both troublesome and hazardous. Sometimes I was obliged to jump over hideous cavities which lay across my path. In other places the ice was as smooth as a mirror, and I was continually falling. As I came close upon the bears, instead of fighting I saw they were only at play. With a true sportsman's instinct, I immediately began to calculate

the value of their skins, for they were each as large as a well-fed ox, and for exhibition purposes these great creatures would surely reap a golden harvest.

Unfortunately, at the very instant I was aiming my carbine, my right foot slipped and I fell upon my back. The violence of the blow entirely deprived me of my senses for nearly half an hour. When I recovered, judge of my surprise at finding that one of those large animals had turned me upon my face, and was just laying hold of the waistband of my breeches, which were then new and made of leather. He was certainly going to carry me, feet foremost, I know not where. Desiring only to protect my life, I seized a large knife from my side pocket and made a stab at one of his hind feet. In doing so I injured three of his toes and he at once let me drop and roared horribly. I took up my carbine and fired at him as he ran off, and he fell immediately.

The noise of the piece roused several thousands of these white bears who were asleep upon the ice within half a mile of me, and the herd immediately rushed to the spot. There was no time to be lost! A most fortunate thought came into my head just at that instant. Though extremely distasteful to me, I took off the head and skin of the dead bear, in half the time that some peo-

I SLAUGHTERED THE CREATURES ONE BY ONE

ple would spend skinning a rabbit, and wrapped myself in it, placing Bruin's cranium over my own. The whole herd surrounded me immediately, and I assure you my position was most hazardous. However, my scheme turned out a most admirable one for my own safety. The beasts all came smelling, and evidently took me for a brother Bruin. I saw among them several cubs not much larger than myself. After they had all smelt me, or rather their deceased companion, we became very sociable, and soon I could mimic all their actions tolerably well, but at growling, hugging, and roaring, they were quite my masters. I began now to think how I might turn their confidence to my advantage.

It has been said, by those seeking to malign me, that I slaughtered the creatures one by one, and, with the assistance of our crew, loaded our ship with bear hams. But my young Readers, knowing my kindness of heart and gentleness of nature, will have no belief in such unjust reports.

Growing more expert in the manners, customs, and behavior of these great creatures, it did not take me long to become their leader, for it was he whose mantle had fallen upon my shoulders. The whole herd soon looked to me for customary buffets peculiar to their kind, which

I administered with skill and effect. My guidance also seemed to be sought, and, with the assistance of a pocketful of barley-sugar scattered behind me, I had no difficulty in guiding them all into the hold of our ship without assistance from any one. To batten down hatches over our strange cargo required neither skill nor bravery on the part of the crew.

As soon as we arrived in England, in the Captain's name I sent some of the bears to the Lords of the Treasury, and some to the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London. From all I received warm thanks; but from the city I was honored with an invitation to dine at Guildhall annually on Lord Mayor's Day.

Some people have ungenerously reported that Captain Phipps did not proceed as far northward as he might have done upon that expedition. Here it becomes my duty to speak in his defense. Our ship was in very proper trim till I lined it with such an enormous load of bears, after which it would have been madness to have attempted to proceed farther, as we were then scarcely able to combat a brisk gale, much less those mountains of ice which lay in the higher latitudes.

CHAPTER XVI

Our Baron excels Baron Tott completely — Gets into disgrace with the Grand Seignior who orders the Baron's head to be removed — The Baron escapes and gets on board a vessel bound for Venice — He dismisses Tott from mind and from further memory

CHAPTER XVI

OF course, one whose adventures have been so varied and astounding as mine is often accused of exaggeration if not untruthfulness. Had I, in any of my narratives, told such plainly impossible tales as Baron de Tott in his famous "Memoirs," I should certainly have deserved the name of Liar. This person's bragging is surely unworthy of a gentleman. He tells the following story, vouching for its truth in every way; and I shall repeat it to you as nearly as my memory will serve in Baron de Tott's exact words:

"The Turks had placed below the castle occupied by our forces an enormous cannon, cast in brass, which would carry a marble ball of eleven hundred pounds weight. I was willing to fire the cannon, but wanted first to see its effect upon the object at which it was aimed. For this purpose I stood at some distance and at height enough to observe properly. No one could be found, however, who was willing to fire this monstrous cannon, for they said it would overthrow not only the castle, but the city also. At length, I succeeded in allaying their fears and volunteered to discharge it myself. This great

gun required not less than three hundred and thirty pounds weight of powder and the ball, as I have mentioned, eleven hundred weight.

"When the engineer brought the priming, the crowd which surrounded me withdrew as far as they could. Even the engineer, who was to load and prime the gun under my direction, was greatly alarmed. I took my stand behind the cannon and with my own hand applied the match to the touch-hole. The shock was like that of an earthquake! At the distance of eighteen hundred feet, the ball burst into three pieces; the fragments crossed the Strait, rebounded on the opposite mountain, and left the surface of the water all in a foam over the whole breadth of the channel."

This, my young Friends, is Baron Tott's account of the largest cannon in the known world. Now when I was there not long ago, the story of Tott's firing this tremendous piece was told me as a proof of the gentleman's great courage.

Since I was determined not to be outdone by a Frenchman, I took this very piece upon my shoulder. After balancing it properly, I jumped into the sea and swam to the opposite shore with it, whence I attempted to throw it back to the spot from which I had taken it. But,

alas, just as I was about to cast it from me, it slipped a little in my hand, and, falling short of its intended goal, fell into the middle of the channel, where it now lies.

Though I was in high favor with the Grand Seignior, this cruel Turk, as soon as he heard of the loss of his famous cannon, ordered my head to be cut off. I was immediately told of this unfortunate plan by a friend deep in the confidence of that tyrant. That very night I made my escape on board a vessel bound for Venice, which was then weighing anchor to proceed on her voyage.

I am sure my young Readers who know me can have no doubt of my veracity, nor can they include me in company with that swaggering, bouncing Tott, whose performances have no importance whatever compared to mine. I trust from this moment you will dismiss this person from all thought and memory.

CHAPTER XVII

This is a chapter that proves the fact that the Baron's memory ought to be dear to Englishmen, especially those who may have the misfortune of hereafter being made prisoners of war — A voyage eastward — The Baron introduces a friend who never betrayed him — Pins his faith on a friend's nose and wins a wager — The Baron's friend points to game in mid-ocean — The friend is fittingly rewarded

CHAPTER XVII

OU doubtless remember my adventure at Gibraltar, at which place I distinguished myself and rendered great service to the English. On my return from there I traveled by way of France to England. Reaching the harbor of Calais, I found a ship just arrived with a number of English sailors, all of whom were prisoners of war. I immediately hit upon an idea of giving those brave fellows their liberty, and this plan of mine was accomplished as follows:

After making a pair of large and powerful wings, each of them forty yards long and fourteen wide, I carefully attached myself to them. At the break of day I arose in the air like a great bird. Every one, even the watch on the ship's deck, was asleep. Hovering over the vessel, I fastened three grappling irons to the tops of the three masts with my famous sling. With no trouble or labor at all, I fairly lifted the vessel several yards out of water, and then proceeded across the channel to Dover, where I arrived in half an hour! Having no further use for my wings, I made them a present to the Governor of

Dover Castle, where they are exhibited to the curious to this very day.

As to the prisoners and the Frenchmen who guarded them, they did not awake till they had been nearly two hours at Dover Pier. The moment the English saw their situation, they changed places with their guard. Of course, they took back all they had been plundered of, but no more, for they were too generous to retaliate and plunder the enemy in return for like treatment.

A short time after the foregoing adventure, I made a voyage to the East Indies with Captain Hamilton. With me I took my favorite dog, a pointer. He was, to use a common phrase, worth his weight in gold, for he never deceived me, no matter what the circumstance or temptation. One day, when we were at least three hundred leagues from land, my dog *pointed.* His action was not to be mistaken. I observed him with astonishment for nearly an hour, for were we not far from sight or scent of any game? I called the Captain's and the officers' attention to my dog's behavior, stating that we must be near land, for my dog smelt game. This caused a general laugh, but that did not in the least change the confidence I placed in my trusted friend's honesty.

After much conversation and some heated argument,

I boldly told the Captain I had more faith in Tray's nose than I had in the eyes of every seaman on board. I therefore wagered the cost of my passage, one hundred guineas, that we should find game within half an hour. The Captain laughed in good humor and asked Mr. Cranford, the ship's surgeon, to feel my pulse, which he did and promptly reported me in perfect health. I insisted upon my own sanity and my dog's good sense and prevailed upon the Captain to accept my wager.

"Done!" and "Done!" were scarcely said on both sides, when some sailors, who were fishing in the long boat which was made fast to the stern of the ship, harpooned an exceedingly large shark. This great fish was hoisted on board and the men began to cut it up for the purpose of saving the oil. Behold! scarcely was the fish opened than they found no less than *six brace of live partridges* in the creature's stomach!

The birds had been so long in these strange quarters that one of the hen partridges was sitting upon four eggs, and a fifth egg was hatching when the shark was opened! This newly hatched bird immediately became the comrade and playfellow of a litter of little kittens, whose mother cat was as proud of it as of her own four-legged family, and made herself very unhappy when the bird flew

out of her reach. As to the other partridges, there were four hens among them, of which one or more were constantly sitting, and we had plenty of game at the Captain's table.

In gratitude to old Tray for being the means of my winning one hundred guineas, I ordered him the bones daily, and sometimes a whole bird. By thus showing my own gratitude and regard for a friend who never deceived me, I recorded myself as an admirer of honesty and rectitude.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Baron visits the moon a second time — His ship is driven by a whirlwind a thousand leagues above the sea — A description of the moon's inhabitants, animals, customs, and weapons of war — The Baron does not tell how he made his return journey, but assures us of the veracity of his narrative.

CHAPTER XVIII

I HAVE already told you of one trip I made to the moon in search of my silver hatchet. I shall now tell you of another journey made in a much pleasanter manner. There was much of interest in this visit, which I will try to describe as carefully as my memory will permit.

I went on this voyage at the request of a distant relation who had a strange notion that there were people to be found on the moon equal in size to those described by Gulliver in the "Empire of Brobdingnag." After due preparations I sailed for the South Seas, where we arrived without coming upon anything unusual except some flying men and women who were playing leap-frog in the air.

On the eighteenth day, after passing the Island of Otaheite (mentioned by Captain Cook), a hurricane struck us and blew our ship at least one thousand leagues above the surface of the water. We remained at this height, and in about the same spot, until a fresh gale arrived, filling our sails nigh to bursting as onwards and

ever upwards we traveled at a prodigious rate. In this way we drove before the gale far above the clouds for six weeks. At last we discovered a great land in the sky, like a shining island, round and bright. Coming to a convenient harbor, we went on shore and soon found the land to be inhabited.

Below us we could plainly see another earth, having cities, trees, mountains, rivers, and oceans; this we took to be the world which you live upon and the one which we had left. Presently we saw huge figures riding upon vultures of enormous size and each of them having three heads. That you may get some idea of the great size of these birds, I must tell you that each of their wings was once the width and six times the length of the main-sheet of our vessel. Instead of riding upon horses, as we do in this world, the inhabitants of the moon fly about on these birds.

The king of this land we found was engaged in war with the sun. He offered me a commission, but I declined the honor His Majesty so benignly proposed.

Everything on the moon is of extraordinary magnitude, a common flea being much larger than one of our sheep! When at war the principal weapons used by the warriors are radishes, which serve the purpose

of darts; those wounded by them die immediately. Their shields are made of mushrooms, a protection from asparagus arrows when radish darts are out of season.

We soon learned that natives of the dog-star were to be found here, commerce tempting them to ramble. These creatures have faces like those of large mastiffs, with their eyes near the ends of their noses. They are not provided with eyelids, but cover their eyes with their tongues when sleeping. These strange wanderers are generally twenty feet high.

As to the natives of the moon, none are less in stature than thirty feet. They can hardly be called human creatures, though they dress their food by fire, as we do. They lose no time, however, at meals, for they have a useful contrivance in their left sides resembling a door, which is easily opened and shut. A whole meal is placed therein at once, and the door is instantly shut and not opened again for a full month. They never indulge in food more than twelve times a year. All but gluttons and food-fanciers must prefer this method to ours. Especially must this manner of eating attract those obliged by circumstance to resort to the food provided by the inns, hostelries, and bake-shops of our time.

When the people of this land grow old, they do not

die, but turn into air and dissolve like smoke. They have but one finger upon each hand, with which they do everything in as perfect a manner as we do, who have four besides a thumb. Their heads are placed under the right arm, and, when they go traveling or about any violent exercise, they generally leave their heads at home, for they can consult them at any distance.

I nearly omitted telling you of another strange but convenient custom of these people. They put their bodies to the same use as we do a sack, and toss through their side doors whatever they have occasion to need in traveling, or wish to place in safe-keeping. Not being troubled with inner organs such as ours, this habit or custom affords them great satisfaction and not the least suffering or inconvenience.

Their eyes, which are of varied colors, they take out or put in as they please, and can see as well with eyes in the hand as in the head! If by accident they lose or damage one or more, they borrow or purchase others. Dealers in eyes are, on this account, very numerous in most parts of the moon, and in this article alone, all the natives are whimsical. Sometimes green, and sometimes yellow, and sometimes eyes of other colors are the fashion.

I know you will think my narrative strange, but if

the shadow of a doubt remains in your young minds, I say, just take a trip to the moon yourselves, and then you will know that I am a traveler whose word may be completely depended upon.

CHAPTER XIX

The Baron tells of Saint Hubert's stag — Shoots a stag with cherry-stones — Tells of venison steak and cherry-sauce — Overcomes a bear in a miraculous manner — Is attacked by a terrible wolf, which he promptly disposes of — Is assailed by a mad dog — The Baron's best cloak is seized with madness

CHAPTER XIX

Y young Friends have heard, I am sure, of Saint Hubert, the protector of hunters, and also of the noble stag with a cross between his antlers which appeared to him in the forest. If you are not familiar with the good Saint, and would add to your store of sportsman's knowledge, I herewith advise you to look into the Saint's career. Maybe one day you may come upon an adventure worthy of recording, as is the one I shall now tell you.

Having once used all my shot, I found myself suddenly in the presence of a stately stag. The creature was looking at me with a calm indifference that seemed to prove that he knew of my empty pouches. But with the usual presence of mind which has served me so well on many occasions, I loaded my gun with a great charge of powder and rammed upon it a handful of cherry-stones, for I had sucked the fruit as far as the hurry would permit. Thus I let fly at him and hit him just on the middle of the forehead between the antlers. The shot stunned him. He staggered, but in a moment made off at full speed.

A year or two after, being in the same forest with a hunting party, I beheld a noble stag with a fine full-grown cherry tree more than ten feet high growing out between his widespread antlers. I immediately remembered my former adventure and looked upon him as my property. I brought him to the ground by one shot. To the true sportsman comes quick reward in field or wood way; thus my good marksmanship not only brought me a fine haunch of venison, but also an excellent cherry-sauce, for the tree was covered with the richest fruit, the like of which I had never tasted before.

I trust that my young Readers of tender hearts and ready sympathies will not think me a hunter who prided himself in slaughter for glory or gain. You must understand that one of my fine feelings and modesty should not be so misjudged. I will, therefore, tell you of another adventure that might have ended ill for me had I not used my quickness of thought and deftness of imagination. Once, in a Polish forest, daylight and powder were gone.

Returning homeward, a terrible bear made at me in great speed, his eyes flaming with hunger and his jaws wide with the same unreasonable desire. All my pockets were searched in an instant for powder

I BEHELD A NOBLE STAG

and ball, but in vain. I found nothing but two spare flints used on the hammer of my fowling-piece. My predicament was dreadful and promised but one ending for me, namely, bruin's dinner. Being an athlete and a runner of some renown, I ran, exerting my prowess to the utmost. As I was familiar with the bear's natural awkwardness, I followed no straight course, but dodged and doubled in my hurried ways. In one of my quick turns, the bear stumbled and fell. This gave me the opportunity I sought, and with great strength I hurled one of my flints at the creature's side. So tremendous was the blow that he was turned full around, thus exposing his other side, at which I let drive my second flint. As I had wisely planned, the flints met with direful force in the savage beast's inward parts, struck fire, and blew up the bear with a terrible explosion. Though I came off safe for the time, I should not wish to try it again, or venture against bears with such poor ammunition.

I ofttimes think that my well-known bravery led me into acts of needless danger and a lack of care for my own welfare. The fiercest and most dangerous animals generally came upon me when I was defenseless. They seemed to have a notion or instinct of this on many occasions. Once a frightful wolf rushed upon me so

suddenly and so closely that my running served me not at all. There was nothing to do but follow a simple instinct, and that was to catch hold of the nearest and least resisting object at hand. This object happened to be the wolf's tail, which was unusually long and strong. With strength born of terror, I whirled the wolf about my head and continued to do so until I came to a tree limb to which I securely tied the wolf whose tail proved useful in making the most secure knot. There I left him, saying, "The longer you hang, Sir, the more time you will have to repent your rudeness to a gentleman who desired only to return to his home undisturbed."

The same means of self-protection would not have answered against a mad dog, which soon after came running against me in a narrow street of Saint Petersburg. Run, those who can, I thought; and to do this the better, I threw off my cloak and was soon safe within the doors of my home. I sent my servant for the cloak and he put it in the wardrobe with my other clothes. The day after, I was amazed and frightened by Jack's bawling, "Oh, Master, your fur cloak is mad!" I hastened to my wardrobe and found almost all my clothes tossed about and torn to pieces.

My servant was perfectly right in his opinion of my

cloak's madness. With my own eyes I saw it falling upon a fine full-dress suit, which it shook and tossed in the most unmerciful manner. Thinking this a timely moment to teach Jack a lesson, I said, "You will do well to observe the energy and thoroughness of the shaking the cloak gives the garments that otherwise would long have gone without a proper shaking."

CHAPTER XX

The Baron visits a ruined tower — Discovers a deep chasm and investigates its mysteries — An eagle carries him off his feet — A marvelous flight over the English Channel and France to the Rock of Gibraltar — A night flight overseas to South America

CHAPTER XX

BOUT the beginning of his present Majesty's reign, some family business matters took me to the Isle of Thanet. While there, when the weather was fine, I found great enjoyment in and much benefit from my morning walks. After a number of these excursions, one day I saw an object upon a lofty hill about three miles distant. Being curious, I lengthened my usual walk and found it to be an ancient ruined temple of great beauty. On the eastern side were the remains of a tower nearly forty feet high. I examined the tower very carefully, thinking that, if I could reach its top, I should have a fine view of the surrounding country.

At last, by means of the ivy that grew in great abundance about it, I mounted the tower, but, I assure you, not without much difficulty and great danger. All of the top I found covered with ivy, except a large bowl-shaped chasm in the very middle. The darkness and depth of this hole excited my curiosity. Perhaps it might lead to an underground passage that penetrated the surrounding hills! Having no line with which to sound its depth,

I resolved to drop a stone down and listen to the echo as it struck the bottom — if bottom there was.

Having found a stone that suited me perfectly, I placed myself over the hole, with one foot on each side of it, and then leaned down to listen as I dropped my stone. Immediately I heard a rustling below, and suddenly a monstrous eagle thrust up its head opposite my face, and, rising with irresistible force, carried me away seated on its large shoulders! I instantly grasped the bird about its neck, which was large enough to fill my arms. The creature's wings, when extended, were ten yards from tip to tip.

As the bird rose smoothly and evenly, my seat was easy, and I greatly enjoyed the view below me. My eagle hovered a while over Margate, and was seen by a number of people. Many shots were taken at us, and one ball hit the heel of my shoe, but did me no injury. My wingéd steed, disliking the treatment from below as much as I, directed its course to Dover Cliff, where it alighted. I thought of dismounting, but was prevented by a sudden discharge of musketry from a party of marines who were at target practice on the beach. The bullets flew about my head and rattled on the feathers of the eagle like hailstones, but as far as I could see it received no

injury. It instantly, and with good reason, ascended and flew over the sea toward Calais, but at so great a height that the Channel looked to me no broader than the Thames at London Bridge.

In about a quarter of an hour I saw we were over a thick wood in France, where my eagle descended abruptly, causing me to slip down to the back part of its head. It alighted on a large tree and raised its head suddenly, and I slid back to my seat as before; but I had no chance of dismounting from my monster steed without the danger of being killed by a fall. After resting a few minutes, it took wing and flew several times around the wood, screaming loud enough to be heard across the English Channel.

In a few minutes one of the same species arose out of the wood and flew directly towards us. It looked at me with marks of displeasure, and came very near to me, but, deciding that I was too small an object to deserve notice, it continued its flight beside its mate. After several turns above the wood, the pair directed their course to the southwest.

I soon observed that the bird I rode could not keep pace with the other, but inclined towards the earth on account of my weight. Its companion, seeing this, turned

around and placed itself directly ahead of my bird so that it could rest beak and neck upon the stalwart tail of the other. This act of intelligence and sympathy afforded me much pleasure. Thus we proceeded until noon, when I saw the rock of Gibraltar very plainly.

The day was fine, and the earth's surface appeared quite like a map where land, sea, lakes, rivers, mountains, and the like were plain to be seen. Having considerable knowledge of geography, I was at no loss to decide what part of the globe I was flying over.

After looking upon the scene stretched beneath me for some time and with great pleasure, I saw that my eagles were about to alight on the peak of Teneriffe. With a downright speed that was terrifying, they descended upon the very crest of the rock, but seeing no chance to escape if I dismounted, I decided to remain where I was. My eagles settled down as if much fatigued by their long flight and the added burden of a passenger. The heat of the sun soon caused them both to fall asleep, nor could I long resist a desire to do likewise.

But in the cool of the evening I was aroused from sleep by the eagle moving beneath me. I had been stretched full length upon that feathered couch, but I sat up immediately, taking a safer position for my some-

what hazardous journey, and away we hastened in the direction of South America. The moon was shining brightly during the whole night and I had a fine view of all the islands in those seas.

CHAPTER XXI

The Baron continues his extraordinary journey — Comes to South America — He discovers roast beef fruit and escapes from a savage beast in a remarkable manner — The Baron takes aboard ample provisions and continues his aerial journey

CHAPTER XXI

S the sun rose the next day, we reached the great continent of America and descended upon a very high mountain. By the dim light I discovered growing most abundantly about us, a kind of shrubbery which was bearing a fruit something like the cabbage. My eagles began to feed upon it most eagerly. I then endeavored to learn something of my situation, but fogs and clouds surrounded me in the thickest darkness, and what made the scene still more shocking, was the hideous howling of wild beasts, some of which seemed to be very near. However, I considered it wise to keep my seat, trusting that the eagle would carry me away if any of the beasts should attack us.

When at last the sun broke through the fog and cloud, I thought of examining the fruit which I had seen the eagles eat. Some of it was hanging within reach, and with my knife I cut a slice. How great was my surprise to see that it had all the appearances of roast beef, regularly mixed, both fat and lean! I tasted it and, finding it well flavored and delicious, I cut several large slices, putting them into my pocket, where I discovered a crust

of bread which I had brought from Margate. In this very crust of bread I found three musket balls that had become embedded in it, doubtless at the time the marines used my eagle and me for target practice. I extracted the bullets, cut a few more slices, and made a hearty meal of bread and cold beef fruit.

I then cut down two of the largest and seemingly finest of the beef fruits, and, tying them together with my garters, I hung them over the eagle's neck for future use. While I was settling these affairs, I discovered another variety of large fruit that looked like an inflated bladder. Being so well rewarded in my first investigation of the fruit of this country, I had a great desire to continue my discoveries, and I thrust my knife into one of them. A fine, pure liquid like Holland gin burst forth, which the eagles, observing, eagerly drank from pools upon the ground. I cut down the bladder as soon as I could and saved about a half-pint, which I tasted and could not distinguish from the best mountain wine. I drank all that remained, and found myself greatly refreshed.

In the meantime, my eagles, not being used to strong drink, began to stagger against the shrubs. I tried to keep my seat, but was soon thrown to some distance

among the bushes. In attempting to rise I thrust my hand upon a large hedgehog which chanced to be lying on the grass upon its back. Immediately the animal closed round my hand so that it was impossible to shake it off. I struck it several times upon the ground, but without effect. While thus employed with the creature that was so much attached to me, I heard a rustling among the shrubbery, and looking up I saw a huge animal within three yards of me. I could make no proper defense, but held out both my hands. The wild creature rushed upon me and seized the hand to which the hedgehog was so firmly fixed. My hand was soon released, and, having run some distance, I saw the creature who attacked me suddenly fall and expire with the hedgehog in its throat. Doubtless the death of this animal was painful, but not undeserved, for had it not attacked one who not only was innocent, but unoffending?

When the danger was over, I went to look for my eagles and found them on the grass fast asleep, doubtless overcome more by the wine fruit than by their long flight. Indeed, I was myself somewhat elevated by the juice of this remarkable fruit. Everything being quiet, I cut down some fine examples, each of which contained about a gallon of juice. These I tied together and slung

across the neck of the eagle that carried no burden. Two more small ones I tied around my own waist. Thus I secured a good stock of provisions, and waited for my birds to recover from their unexpected naps.

Presently, observing that the eagles showed marked signs of recovery, I again took my seat and waited with some impatience for them to continue their flight. Being fully satisfied with the discoveries I had made in this part of the world, I was anxious to continue adventures which I knew would be not only interesting to myself, but of great value to the world. At last the birds rose with great speed and vigor. Directing their course to the north, they crossed the Gulf of Mexico, passed over North America, and steered directly for the Polar Regions. This gave me the finest chance possible to view this vast continent.

When we entered the frigid zone the cold began to affect me; but my usual fortitude and endurance held me superior to the distress of cold or the inconvenience of travel. Passing over Hudson Bay, I saw several of the company's ships lying at anchor, and many tribes of Indians marching with their furs to market.

By this time I had become a very expert eagle-rider and could sit upright and observe what passed beneath

AT LAST THE BIRDS ROSE WITH GREAT SPEED AND VIGOR

me, but nevertheless I was generally outstretched along the eagle's neck grasping it with my arms, my hands being thrust among the bird's feathers to keep them perfectly warm.

The eagles continued their flight with terrifying speed over vast fields of ice and barren stretches of snow. While my mind was filled with many thoughts and much concern for my own safety, the eagle which led our strange flight struck its head against a solid, transparent object and in a moment the one I rode suffered the same fate, and both fell downwards, seemingly dead.

Here and now we would all have been killed, had not a sense of danger given me the cleverness and skill to save myself and my eagles from a downright fall of more than two miles. No sooner did I see the eagles strike the frozen cloud (which was common in this neighborhood) than I laid myself along the back of the foremost eagle and took hold of its wings to keep them extended as in usual flight. As for the one I had been riding, I stretched out my legs behind supporting its wings in like manner. This had the effect desired, for we descended, slowly and safely, by gliding. You doubtless have often observed such descending by hawks and other large birds. With no injury I thus guided my stricken eagles safely to a moun-

tain of ice which I supposed to be about three miles above the level of the sea.

Our delivery was surely a miracle! I dismounted, unloaded the eagles, and then gave each some of the restorative wine. My thought was first for those faithful birds, and none of the horrors that surrounded us moved me in any way. The roaring of the waves, crashing of ice, and the howling of bears combined to make my dilemma awful and tremendous. But so great was my concern for the recovery of the eagles that I did not notice the dangers to which I was exposed. I stood over them in trembling anxiety, knowing that it was only by means of them that I could possibly be delivered from my desperate predicament.

Suddenly a monstrous bear began to roar behind me with a voice like thunder. I turned around and beheld the beast just ready to devour me! But a few moments before, as you know, I had been administering the wine to my poor eagles, and the bladder containing that precious liquor was still in my hands. A spasm of fear seized me and in turn I gripped the wine-bladder with such force that it burst and sent the liquid in a powerful stream into the bear's eyes. This for the time totally deprived the creature of sight, and it turned from me

instantly and ran away in a state of bewilderment and terror.

The danger being over, I turned my attention to the eagles, whom I found in a fair way of recovery. Suspecting that they might be faint from want of food, I took a beef fruit, cut it into small slices, and gave it to them. Much to my satisfaction and their own pleasure, the beef fruit was devoured instantly.

Having given them plenty to eat and drink, and arranged the remainder of my provisions, I took my seat upon my especial eagle as before. After composing myself I settled down to a good meal, which you must allow I certainly deserved. All those matters being arranged, I deemed it wise, with my own hands, to point the heads of both eagles towards the southeast, as England lay in that direction. Presently off we flew, and in a few hours I beheld with great joy the shores of Old England.

The eagles descended gradually as we drew near shore, intending, as I supposed, to alight on one of the Welsh mountains. But when they came within sixty yards of the nearest elevation two guns were fired at them, loaded with heavy balls. One of the balls lodged in a beef fruit that hung from my waist; the other, alas, entered the breast of the foremost eagle, who fell to the

ground, while the one which I rode, having received no injury, flew away with amazing swiftness.

This last experience alarmed me greatly, and I began to think it would be impossible for me to escape with my life; but, recovering a little, I once more looked down upon the earth. Much to my delight, I saw the familiar surroundings of Margate at a little distance. Presently the eagle descended on the old tower whence it had carried me on the morning of the day before. It no sooner came down than I threw myself from its back, happy to find that I was once more restored to the world. The eagle flew away in a few moments, and I sat down to compose my fluttering spirits, which I did in a few hours.

As soon as I could do so I paid a visit to my friends and related the adventures which I have just told to you, my young Readers. As with you, amazement marked every countenance. Congratulations and compliments were showered upon me, and we passed an evening of great enjoyment, every person present continuing to pay many repeated compliments to my COURAGE and VERACITY.

CHAPTER XXII

The Baron insists upon the veracity of his Memoirs — He forms a design of making discoveries in the interior parts of Africa — He calls upon his illustrious friend, Hilaro Frosticos — The Baron prepares for his journey — Description of his chariot: the beauties and comforts of the marvelous vehicle; the animals that drew it and the mechanism of its wheels — Brief advice to young adventurers seeking to follow the Baron's glorious career — The Baron convoys a squadron to Gibraltar — His chariot is damaged by Pompey's Pillar — He splits a great rock at the Cape of Good Hope and thereby names a mountain.

CHAPTER XXII

I SHALL not believe for a moment that my young Readers doubt the truth of all I have related, for your hardy spirits, like mine, go afield into wonders and adventure as naturally as the eagle wings its uninterrupted path across glorious heights skyward. If there be any one of mature years who questions my veracity, I will meet him with any weapon he may select at any time or place. Thus, having recorded myself as not only truthful but undaunted, I will proceed with my narrative, counting upon your unshaken belief and unfailing sympathy.

Yes, I passed some time in England recuperating from the strain and ardor of certain adventures, but, like you, I soon became restive and longed to be out upon others. This longing took hold of my spirit with great force, turning my mind continually to the thought of what a great field of discovery lay in the interior parts of Africa. I could neither sleep nor eat for the imaginings that stirred me. I therefore determined to gain all proper support from the Government to penetrate the source of the Nile and claim the viceroyship of the interior kingdoms of

Africa, for I could think of no one better fitted than myself to fill a part of such importance and grandeur.

Happily for me, I had a most powerful friend at court whom, for the sake of wisdom, I shall call the illustrious Hilaro Frosticos. After passing another night of sleeplessness, due to the burning imagination of my discoveries in Africa, I hastened to my friend and confided my hopes and intentions. He gravely considered my words and, after some awful meditations, assured me that I of all men living was most fitted to meet and surmount the adventures and obstacles attending so noble a purpose. He furthermore assured me that such wealth, power, and influence as were his might be considered mine to use without let or hindrance. Having thus proved his friendship and provided his patronage, he said gravely:

"Sir, your determination and courage deserve the gratitude and admiration of all mankind, and it gives me great pride and satisfaction to be of assistance to one so noble and self-sacrificing. The honor I shall gain as reflected from you, Sir, will set me high in the esteem of all England and the watchful world. Come, let us be off and prepare immediately such matters as are necessary to an errand so important and patriotic."

I will not burden you, my young Readers, with a long description of the many details that followed and were so necessary to my honor and comfort, but some brief words should be given to the chariot provided for my departure and for the speedy and miraculous passage into fields of romance, adventure, and discovery.

This chariot was of enormous size, in form like unto an hazelnut of mammoth proportions. The wheels consisted of upwards of ten thousand springs formed so as to give great impetuosity to the vehicle; and it is needless to tell you that those wheels were more complex than a dozen clocks like that of Strasbourg. To give added buoyancy to its great weight, balloons of imposing magnitude were cleverly attached. The interior of my chariot was most commodious, gloriously decorated, and fitted with every luxury and comfort.

This astounding vehicle was drawn by a team of nine bulls, harnessed to it three after three. These noble beasts were shod, not with iron as is customary, but with the crowns and coronets of kings and nobles, contributed for this especial purpose. After sufficient heated air had been forced into them, a special cement or paste was applied to each shoe, thus assuring buoyancy and permanence. With these shoes the creatures could make

astonishing journeys over earth or sea with great velocity. The harnesses were fastened with golden buckles and decked with jewels of great value.

You will be especially interested in the postilions provided: these were nine crickets, as large as monkeys, who sat squat upon the heads of the bullocks and were continually chirping at a most infernal rate, loud in proportion to their unusual size.

The exterior of this wonderful carriage was adorned with banners and a superb festoon of laurel which had at one time shaded one upon horseback.

Now, having given you a very clear description of my machine for traveling to Africa, I shall proceed to relate the exploits of my voyage. I wish to add, however, that ambitious boys who strive to build a chariot like mine (as doubtless they will) must observe great care in harnessing the bullocks, for these creatures are not only restive, but often inconsiderate with their heels and horns. As to the cricket postilions, I should advise a long and patient training in manners. Insects of this variety and size are often unruly when each annoys the other by chirpings that are more confusing than helpful.

Taking the reins in hand, as music gave a salute, I cracked my whip over the backs of my restive bullocks

and away we flew. Within three hours I found myself between the Isle of Wight and the mainland of England. Here I remained four days until I had received part of my accompaniment, which I was ordered to convoy. 'Twas a squadron of men-of-war that had been prepared for the Baltic, but which were now destined for the Mediterranean. With the assistance of large hooks and eyes like those worn in our hats but of some hundredweight each, the men-of-war hooked themselves to my chariot. In fact, nothing could be simpler or more convenient, for they could be hooked or unhooked in an instant with perfect ease and safety.

Again I cracked my whip to the encouraging salute of artillery. We were instantly going at a prodigious speed, and in six jiffies I found myself and all my retinue safe and in good spirits under the Rock of Gibraltar. Here I unhooked my squadron and allowed the vessels to proceed in the ordinary manner to the place of their destination.

I was now free to continue unencumbered my journey to the Isle of Candia. Having been properly refreshed at that place, I proceeded and in a short time arrived in the land of Egypt. I have little of importance to tell of this stage of my journey save that a slight mis-

hap befell my chariot when its wheels became entangled with the Pillar of Pompey, the Needle of Cleopatra, and a pyramid or two, but, undaunted and undisturbed, my bullocks trotted on with astonishing speed across the Isthmus of Suez into the Red Sea. As we rode at so terrific a rate, we left a track across the barren country which by certain wiseacres is said to be an ancient canal cut by the Ptolemies from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, but was in reality, as my young Readers perceive, no more or less than the wheel tracks of my marvelous chariot.

My coach springs and wheels being somewhat damaged, I believed it unwise to continue my journey southward and overland across the great marble mountains at the source of the Nile, and I hastened on my way as best I could by sea to the Cape of Good Hope. The surface of the water gave less resistance to the wheels of my machine, and it passed along the waves like the chariot of Neptune. In short, we scudded away to the western coast of Africa, where even Alexander had not courage to venture. I drove on with amazing rapidity, but unfortunately ran too close to the Cape and completely shivered the rock in a horizontal direction. The summit of the mountain was knocked into the sea, and

the steep mountain thereby flattened at the top; hence this spot has since borne the name of Table Mountain from its similarity to that piece of furniture.

But alas, young Readers, my noble chariot was badly damaged and in need of repair, and I was obliged to consider other means of travel if I would continue my journey as my will and spirit demanded. I have observed, however, that those whose courage equals their determination find naught that can daunt their spirits or prevent the reward of such heroism. I have no doubt that you find this your own experience, and I sincerely commend you therefor.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Baron leaves his chariot at the Cape of Good Hope and returns by ship to England — Wrecked on an island of ice — The Baron and crew tow the island back to England — The Privy Council supports another expedition — Description of the vehicle and the Sphinx — The Baron's retinue starts upon the journey into the heart of Africa

CHAPTER XXIII

ITH grief and consternation I considered the disaster to my chariot, but great minds are never thwarted by adversity. With permission of the Dutch Governor, my machine was stored, and the bullocks received every refreshment provided after so terrible a voyage. As I could do no more, I took passage in an Indiaman bound for London with the intention of laying the matter before the Privy Council.

Nothing of great import occurred until we arrived off the coast of Guinea, when, to our complete astonishment, we beheld an enormous hill, seemingly composed of glass, advancing against us in the open sea. I immediately knew it to be an island of ice and determined to make all possible speed from such horrible danger. We did so, but all in vain, for about eleven o'clock at night, we were struck by the rapidly advancing island.

The terror, the shrieks, and despair of the whole crew were unspeakable until I, knowing there was not a moment to be lost, cheered their spirits and bade them not despond, but do as I should request them. In a few minutes the ship was half full of water, and the enormous

castle of ice hemmed us in on every side as great fragments from its sides fell upon our ill-fated vessel. Climbing to the very top of a mast, I managed to make it fast to a great projection of ice, and, calling to the crew to follow me, we all escaped from the wreck by scrambling to the summit of the island.

The rising sun gave us a dreadful picture of our situation. Our ship overnight had been closed in on all sides with great masses of ice and was absolutely buried in such a manner that we could see her at great depth under our feet. Having debated what was best to be done, we cut down through the ice and got some cables of the vessel and also the boats, which, making fast to the island, we towed it with all our might, determined to bring all home or perish in the attempt.

On the top of the ice mountain we spread what oakum, dregs, and refuse we could find in the vessel, which, in a few hours, on account of the sun and the melting of the ice, became an excellent fertilizer. Having some seeds of rare vegetables in my pocket, we shortly had a fine crop of fruits and roots growing on our inhospitable island. The growth was so abundant that our whole crew was supplied; the breadfruit-tree and a tree bearing plum pudding, hot and served with sauces, especially delighted the sailors.

After weeks of incredible fatigue from continual towing, we arrived in England, and I immediately laid before the Privy Council a statement of my voyage, begging immediate assistance to travel into Africa and, if possible, refit my former chariot. Everything was instantly granted to my satisfaction, and I received orders to get myself ready for departure as soon as possible.

I shortly learned that the Emperor of China had sent, as a present in my honor, a most curious animal which for some time had been confined in the Tower. A most fitting creature, indeed, to attend me upon my continued discoveries in Africa. She was called Sphinx and was one of the most tremendous though magnificent figures I had ever beheld. She was harnessed with superb trappings to a large flat-bottomed boat upon which was a building of wood exactly resembling Westminster Hall. Two balloons were placed over it, attached by a number of ropes to the boat, to keep up a proper equilibrium and prevent it from overturning.

In this magnificent structure we advanced, sailing gently into the open sea. It being calm weather, we could scarcely feel the motion of the vehicle and passed our time in grand discussion upon the glorious intention of our voyage and the important discoveries that would

be made by me. I neglected to tell you that our noble Sphinx was ridden astride by the brave Count Gossamer who at times was merciless and ill-tempered in the use of his outrageous spurs. This treatment could not be endured by a creature so high-spirited as our Sphinx, and, with a wild plunge, she cast the Count, like a sky-rocket, far out to sea. The fellow suffered no injury, however, for from my exalted seat I could see him clutching the side of a precipitous cliff at least forty leagues distant.

The loss of Count Gossamer necessitated my assuming control as well as command; accordingly, I steered directly to the Cape of Good Hope. Arriving at the Cape, I immediately gave orders to repair my former chariot and proceeded with due pomp and proper pride upon my journey.

With my whole retinue, including my friends, Gog and Magog, we made speed into the heart of Africa. We journeyed nearly due north for several days and met with nothing remarkable except the astonishment of the savage natives who beheld our equipage, which was, indeed, marvelous in magnitude, but not unfitting for the importance of its errand and those it conveyed.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Baron passes into the heart of Africa, proceeding from the Cape northwards — His ingenuity defeats a host of lions by a curious stratagem — The Baron travels through an immense desert — His company, chariot, etc., are covered by a whirlwind of sand — He extricates his party and arrives in a fertile country of great beauty

CHAPTER XXIV

THE Dutch Government at the Cape, to do them justice, gave us all possible assistance for the expedition. The country through which we advanced appeared in many places to be capable of every cultivation and of abundant fertility. The natives and the Hottentots of this part of Africa have been often described to you by travelers, and it is not necessary to say more about them. But in the more interior parts, the appearance, manners, and genius of the people are totally different.

We directed our course by compass and the stars, every day getting prodigious quantities of game and at night camping within a proper enclosure for fear of the wild beasts. One day, in particular, we heard on every side the horrible roaring of lions resounding from rock to rock like broken thunder. It seemed as if it was the meeting-place of all those savage animals to fall upon our party. That whole day we advanced with great caution, our hunters scarcely venturing beyond pistol-shot from our caravan for fear of a hideous death. At

night we camped as usual and threw up a circular entrenchment about our tents. We had scarcely retired to repose when we found ourselves serenaded by at least one thousand lions, approaching with an even front on every side and within a hundred paces.

Our cattle showed symptoms of horror, all trembling and in cold perspiration. I directly ordered our whole company to stand at arms and not to make any noise by firing until I should command them. I then took a quantity of tar and strewed it in a continuous stream around the encampment, within which circle of tar I immediately placed a train or circle of gunpowder. I then anxiously awaited the approach of the lions. These dreadful animals, knowing, I presume, the number of our company, advanced cautiously, but from all sides at an equal pace, roaring in hideous concert so as to resemble an earthquake or some similar convulsion of the world.

When the beasts had at length advanced and soaked their paws in tar and had otherwise bedaubed their bushy hair and whiskers, I knew that the moment of my triumph had come. At the exact instant the creatures were about to make their deadly charge upon us, I discharged my pistol into the train of gunpowder, which, of course,

exploded on every side, making the lions recoil in general uproar and take flight with utmost haste and frightful panic.

In an instant we could see the beasts scattered through the forest, roaring in agony and whirling about like so many Will-o'-the-Wisps, their shaggy coats afire from the tar and gunpowder. I then ordered a general pursuit. We followed them on every side through the dense woods, their own light serving as a guide. Until sunrise we pursued them to their lairs and shot or otherwise destroyed every one of them. During the whole of our journey we never heard the roaring of a lion, nor did any wild beast presume to make another attack upon our party. After this adventure I was more than convinced of the value of immediate presence of mind which gives terror to the most savage of enemies. I am also convinced that the bravery of a gentleman and soldier meets all terrifying situations with composure, knowing that valor is, in itself, mastery unchallenged.

After many dangers and discomforts natural to that part of the world, we at length arrived at the border of an immeasurable desert, extending on every side of us like an ocean. Not a tree or shrub or blade of grass was to be seen. The great expanse was of extremely

fine sand, mixed with gold dust and small sparkling pearls.

The gold dust and pearls seemed to have little value to us because we had no hope of returning to England for some time. Presently we observed, at a great distance, something like a smoke arising over the verge of the horizon. With our telescopes we perceived it to be a whirlwind tearing up the sand and tossing it about in the heavens with frightful fury. I immediately ordered our company to erect a mound of great size around us. This was done with astonishing labor and perseverance, and we then roofed it over with planks and timbers which we had with us for that purpose. Our labor was scarcely finished when the sand came rolling upon us like the waves of the sea; 'twas a storm and river of sand united. It continued to advance from the same direction for three days and completely covered the mound we had erected, burying us all within.

The intense heat of the place was intolerable. But guessing, by the cessation of the noise, that the storm had passed, we set about digging a passage to the light of day again; this feat we accomplished in a short time. Ascending, we found that the whole of our protective structure had been so completely covered by the sand

that there appeared no hills, but one continued plain with inequalities or ridges on it like the waves of the sea. We soon extricated our vehicle and retinue from the burning sands, but not without great danger, as the heat was most intense.

Storms of a similar nature several times attacked us, but by using the same precautions, we repeatedly preserved ourselves from destruction. Having traveled more than nine thousand miles over this burning desert, exposed to the direct rays of a scorching sun, without coming upon a rivulet or shower from heaven to refresh us, we became in time almost desperate.

At last, to our great joy, we beheld some mountains at a great distance and on nearer approach observed them covered with a carpet of verdure, groves, and woods. Nothing could be more romantic or beautiful than the rocks and precipices intermingled with flowers and shrubs of every kind, and palm-trees of such prodigious size as to surpass anything to be seen in Europe.

Trees of every variety grew wild in the greatest abundance; antelopes and sheep and buffaloes wandered about groves and valleys in profusion. The trees resounded with the tuneful melody of gorgeous birds and everything showed a scene of rural peace and joy.

In sooth, Dame Nature in her glory vied
With Heaven's dome, all glorious, thus to pay
Homage to one whose courage had defied
Night's haunting fears and obstacles of day.

Now, dear young Readers, having overcome unheard-of obstacles and at last arrived safely in the paradise I have described, in what more fitting place could I leave you and your memories of my unequaled adventures? To be sure, my continued journeys took me deep into the heart of Africa, where, as usual, I met and overcame every enemy and obstacle, and in due time Fate carried me into the untracked wilds of the Americas, where I and all my retinue lost our scalps. But again my bravery and presence of mind were the means not only of regaining all losses (which were replaced in proper order), but of overcoming the savages who had so cruelly treated me and my companions.

In due time and after many other trials and triumphs, I returned to England, where the Privy Council rewarded me most fittingly for my wisdom and unexampled courage and endurance. It is needless to say that the glory reflected by me has added to that of England and the rest of the world. It is, of course, beneath my dignity to state that my veracity is and will

remain unquestioned, for time will prove and history record the adventures that I have had the pleasure of relating and you, in turn, have had the privilege of reading.

ADIEU!

FINALLY, as I conclude my veracious narrative, I beg of my young Readers the indulgence due a soldier and gentleman of my fortitude and distinction. You have followed me by land and sea; you have attended with admiration and unshaken belief the wanderings of one whose courage was only equaled by his presence of mind and incredible ingenuity. If, at times, you have marveled at feats accomplished by no other man, I am sure your spirits have sought to emulate and your courage to achieve like adventures.

I shall not endeavor in this chronicle of my accomplishments to record a thousand more, absorbing as they would prove to those of your youthful imagination. But it is my desire (I shall not say command) that when you come to riper years you shall read for yourselves completer records of my adventures so justly famous. No annals of history hold the like for wonder, courage, unstained honor, and veracity.

So, young Comrades in ordeal and triumph, I bid you *farewell*, commending you to Fortune for favor and fame. In conclusion, I require of you a strict ad-

herence to truth, no matter what the pain or sacrifice, and I exhort you to follow the examples of those whose fortitude remains unmoved in battle, stress, or storm, and whose honor stands glorious and unstained before the eyes of the onlooking world. Thus am *I* and thus do I remain,

MUNCHAUSEN

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